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New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 89 ***(continued)***

(e) Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Conference (A/CONF.167/9 and Corr.1 and Corr.2)

Report of the Secretary-General (A/49/425 and Add.1)

Notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the reports of the United Nations Development Programme (A/49/414 and A/49/459)

Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda): When my Prime Minister, Mr. Lester Bryant Bird, addressed the General Assembly four weeks ago, he said:

> "while the United Nations has been a symbol of hope for people from small countries such as mine, much remains for it to do before it can represent to them an organization which ... upholds the rights of their small nations, which promotes their social progress and better standards of life." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 19)*

The United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Barbados last April and May, surely inspired greater hope in the minds of people from small countries. This was the first time in history — certainly the first time in the history of the United Nations — that small island States had become the focus of the Organization's special attention.

However, it certainly was not the first time in history that small islands had become the focus of international attention. Between 1492 and 1763 empires were built by the forceful acquisition of small islands in the Caribbean. These were jewels in the crown of many a prince. In 1763, for example, two Caribbean islands — islands not much larger than mine — were exchanged by warring Powers, in a peace treaty, for what is today the second largest nation on Earth. Such was the value of small islands in the days before the industrial revolution, when the Caribbean produced great wealth for mighty nations.

Today the wealth of the islands of the Caribbean is to be found in its people and their institutions, its biodiverse flora and fauna, its tropical reefs and tropical rain forests and its incredible natural beauty. Hundreds of millions of people, primarily from the industrialized countries, have come to stare at our beauty, to learn a little of our history and to seek respite from a harried life in their maddening metropolises.

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Can the United Nations be more than "a symbol of hope" to people from small island nations? Can the United Nations promote a better standard of life for people from small island States? Can the United Nations uphold the right of small island nations to exist free from the threat of environmental destruction? Much remains for the United Nations to do before it can claim to represent these legitimate aspirations.

When the Global Conference was convened in Barbados and the Programme of Action was negotiated, five very important international implementation directives emerged. These are contained in annex II, Chapter XV, of the report. Today my delegation will address only one of them — to be found in section 5 of that part of the Chapter.

The report mandates the formulation of a range of indicators of economic and ecological vulnerability. These are needed for the purpose of measuring sustainable development in a way that that cannot be accomplished by the crude gross national product (GNP) per capita device. The GNP per capita device is neither apt nor realistic for the purpose of measuring the economic performance of small States. Indeed, everyone deems it, by itself, wholly inadequate for the purpose of measuring sustainable development in any State. The GNP per capita device was developed by economists from large countries, with large countries in mind, and at a time when they could not envision the existence of a small island State, much less the application of such a device to so recent a phenomenon.

The GNP per capita device does not reflect the fact that our island States are too small to provide for their populations, at a low cost, many of the services routinely afforded to citizens of large countries. As the economists would say, we suffer from a "diseconomy of scale". The GNP per capita device fails to reflect our inability to penetrate markets for our embryonic manufacturing industries, whose production levels reflect small scale. It does not give an adequate representation of our vulnerability. A single hurricane can set our development back 10 years or more when it destroys 50 per cent of our housing stock, completely devastates our agriculture and damages for a long time our precious but fragile tourism industry. A month ago Saint Lucia, which is in the eastern Caribbean, was visited by a tropical storm, which destroyed more than 80 per cent of its banana crop. This represented more than half of Saint Lucia's annual gross domestic product. Our proneness to natural disaster cannot be disregarded, given the frequency and inevitability of such incidents.

We join in the expressions of condolence to the Government and the people of Egypt following the recent natural disaster in that country and its horrible consequences, including the loss of life.

In our region, even man-made and unintended circumstances can have an impact on our economic performance in ways that large countries can avoid. During the gulf war, for example — 5,000 miles away from the Caribbean — fear of terrorism caused many people to cancel their travel plans. The effect on our peaceful tourist destinations was devastating. The GNP per capita device does not, and cannot, reflect that vulnerability. We decry its use because it paints an inaccurate picture of our development status. It also fails to measure the environmental costs associated with production, consumption and disposal in any nation. The need for a more useful set of economic-performance indicators is surely very evident in this post-Rio world.

The Conference report recommends that

> "Appropriate expertise should continue to be utilized in the development, compilation and updating of the vulnerability index." *(A/CONF.167/9, para. 114)*

In this regard, the University of Malta and the University of the West Indies, among others, must be congratulated for providing the necessary intellectual resources. The emerging vulnerability index is not intended for use as a yardstick of poverty or wealth; rather, it is intended as a device for measuring the lack of economic resilience arising from the relative inability of a country to shelter itself from forces outside its control. It is easy to construct; the results are not difficult to comprehend; and it lends itself to international comparisons.

Today we embrace the attempt to bring novel and improved thinking to the development process, for by succeeding, small island States will have contributed to the emergence of a better world. We join, in that regard, the statements made by the Group of 77, the delegation of Barbados on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. We are thankful to the organs and agencies of the United Nations system for the roles they have played in implementing various facets of the Barbados Programme of Action.

Most important, my delegation applauds and thanks the Government and the people of Barbados for having

sacrificed much in order to make our island voices heard. Our efforts will come to naught if the industrialized countries do not cease and desist from engaging in harmful production patterns, wasteful consumption lifestyles and deadly disposal behaviours. Global warming and sea-level rise threaten the very existence of small island States; until our skies cease to be a dump site for harmful gases, our small countries will remain vulnerable and threatened.

Our United Nations must uphold our right to exist free of the threat of destruction. The next 50 years will be critical. We believe that our United Nations possesses the will and the power to harness the forces of good for sustained development and a reversal of environmental decline. The citizens of small island developing States wish to move from seeing the United Nations as symbol to embracing it as saviour.

Mr. Edwards (Marshall Islands): On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I would like to join with the previous statements expressing sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of Egypt on the natural disaster that they are experiencing.

Let me also reiterate the sentiments in regards to the election of President Essy that were expressed on behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands by Mr. Phillip Muller, Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his statement in the general debate.

We have just heard a statement on behalf of the South Pacific by Australia, a statement by Trinidad and Tobago as Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States, and a statement by the Group of 77. My delegation fully supports those statements. On behalf of my Government, I would also like to pay a special tribute to the Government and the people of Barbados for the hospitality and friendship they extended to the delegation of the Marshall Islands during the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

My delegation had high hopes and aspirations when we set out on the road that led us to the Barbados Conference. All the long hours and lengthy negotiations tested our patience, and we were glad to see that the world's attention would finally be focused on the small island States. We have stated many times that we feel our group of countries is a much-neglected group in the United Nations family of nations. To show our sincere commitment to the Rio process and its follow-up, we have implemented many projects in the Marshall Islands aimed at sustainable development, with many more in the planning stage. It was in that spirit that we arrived in Barbados.

The Conference itself was very fruitful in strengthening old links and forging new relations among the leaders of the small island States. Our leaders were full of resolve to ensure that the partnership we had started upon in Rio should not be lost as we moved forward from Barbados. However, I would be less than frank if I did not mention the chagrin that was felt at the low turnout from the developed countries. This was after all supposed to be a conference "on" and not "of" small island developing States.

Let us look closely at one of the outcomes of Barbados — the Programme of Action and its recommendations. On the whole, the first chapters contain most of the requirements that my Government has envisaged in order to reach sustainable development. We would have preferred stronger language under the international action sections, but we joined in the consensus, since funding would be a separate issue considered as a whole. My Government stands ready to implement those national commitments that are not yet in place and to work jointly with our region, as outlined by Australia. However, we cannot pursue these goals without the assistance of the international community. In this regard, I wish to commend those countries that have stood by the Pacific Islands and that have provided urgently needed assistance. We appreciate what has been provided, and we shall remain grateful for such assistance.

Therefore, we feel that the section of the Programme concerning funding is totally inadequate. We may, as the relevant paragraph says, seek to ensure that appropriate attention is given to the concerns of the small island States by the various international institutions. The danger is that such a vague sentence will undermine our efforts on the implementation level. We are grateful to those friends who continue to support us, and my Government strongly urges the developed countries to extend some of their official development assistance to the small island States. We also support the call made by the Group of 77 to ensure that the 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance is reached.

On institutional follow-up, we recognize that there should be an identifiable unit within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. This office should have sufficient staff to be able properly to

carry out its duties and mandates. This is stated very clearly in paragraph 123 of the Programme of Action, and I strongly believe that we are not micro-managing the Secretary-General if we voice the opinion that there should be at least four professional staff members dedicated to implementing the outcomes of the Barbados Conference. We also feel that the regional strengthening of the economic commissions should occur at the subregional level wherever possible. For the Pacific, this would mean the Pacific Operations Centre of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, based in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

We commend the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the work carried out on the two feasibility studies. In particular, we are glad to see the report on the technical assistance programme for small island developing States (SIDS/TAP), as we have been aware, ever since we became a Member of the United Nations, of shortcomings in the area of technical cooperation among developing countries. In our opinion, the SIDS/TAP programme could be implemented immediately, as the international framework required is more or less already in place.

We also welcome the study done on the small island developing States information network (SIDS/NET); it is being studied in great detail in our capital. There are still some unanswered questions, but we are hopeful that we can have a period of consultations with UNDP and donor countries to see how this programme could be implemented. For many small island States, SIDS/NET would entail a considerable investment. We need to look at this in detail through careful examination.

These proposals are directed at capacity-building in the small island States, a critical element in sustainable development. But we have to realize that a certain degree of capacity-building is required before we can get to the level of implementing these proposals nationally. I must add that we are disappointed that these two reports were not translated and distributed at an earlier date.

We were all very much aware that the Barbados Conference was an ambitious undertaking. At the same time, we were reminded that it would be the first follow-up to Rio — in essence, a test of the international will to implement Agenda 21. We were told by experts that the islands would be useful arenas for pilot projects because of their small scale and relative isolation. The cost would also be much less — or so those experts said.

Our negotiating partners had different ideas as far as the cost was concerned. A journalist from the Pacific proposed the following headline for his final report: "North to Islands: Swim." It seemed to him that the North was only reaffirming existing pledges and programmes, and that the islands would have to turn to each other for assistance and advice. This has even been reiterated in a well-known journal that often circulates in this very building.

The Marshall Islands, together with the other island countries of the Pacific region, did not come to the Barbados Conference empty-handed. Our forests, atmospheres, exclusive economic zones, marine ecosystems and coral reefs contribute a great deal to the preservation, if not the betterment, of the overall global environment. We would not like to come away with less.

We know what the sustainable development needs of the Marshall Islands are. The costs envisaged to meet those needs are minute in comparison with the costs of giant development projects around the world. Our requests are not extravagant.

I appeal to the States Members of this Organization to look closely at the commitments freely made at Rio and to reaffirm to the members of the Alliance of Small Island States that they will fulfil those commitments. Furthermore, I would like to invite the Member States to look favourably on the draft resolution that will be submitted by the Alliance of Small Island States through the Group of 77, and to ensure its passage and implementation.

Mr. George (Federated States of Micronesia): We join you, Mr. President, and previous speakers in expressing our sympathy to the people and Government of Egypt on the loss of life and destruction suffered as a result of the recent flood.

The Ambassador of Australia has spoken for all the Pacific Forum countries, including the Federated States of Micronesia, on this important item — the report on and outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados from 26 April to 6 May 1994.

At the outset, I should like, on behalf of my Government, to thank the Government of Barbados for the excellent arrangements it made, for its hospitality and for its valuable contributions to the success of the Global Conference.

I should like also to express my Government's appreciation to Australia's Ambassador for the Environment, Penelope Anne Wensley, for the invaluable role she played as Chairperson of the Preparatory and Main Committees of the Barbados Conference.

The Federated States of Micronesia fully supports and associates itself with the regional statement made by Australia in its capacity as Chairman of the South Pacific Forum. I am also happy to say that my country fully supports the statement made by the Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago as Chairperson of our transregional common-interest group, the Alliance of Small Island States, to which we attach great importance. As a member of the Group of 77, we are in full agreement with the statement made by the Ambassador of Algeria in his capacity as Chairman of our Group.

In 1992, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the world community adopted Agenda 21. All the nations gathered at that historic Conference declared that Agenda 21 reflected a global consensus and political commitment at the highest level of cooperation on development and environment. They further stressed that the cooperation of all States was crucial for the fulfilment of the objectives of Agenda 21. It is in this context that we regard the issue under discussion — the report and outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States — as a subject which is crucial to the Federated States of Micronesia.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, we have been able to put forward an agenda for world attention concerning the sustainable development of small island developing States. The Barbados Conference was not only the first global conference on sustainable development, but also the first concrete implementation of Agenda 21. Over the past two years or so, many delegations have spent time, effort and energy in the complex preparations and negotiations which led to the adoption of the Programme of Action in Barbados in May 1994. Given the human, technical, financial and political complexities of that process, we all know now how great a challenge sustainable development really is. While addressing that challenge has been a demanding exercise for all involved, we are now embarking on yet another stage, which will require much greater effort than before. As we all know, the implementation stage of the Barbados Programme of Action is a tremendous task, which awaits the greatest commitment of the international community.

It is exceedingly crucial to understand that, if we fail to breathe life into the Programme of Action, all of our efforts will be futile. In Rio we all joined in pursuing a new agenda for the twenty-first century. It is even clearer to us today that partnership participation in the sustainable development movement will require the genuine commitment and support of the international community, especially that of the industrialized countries.

My delegation believes that the ongoing work of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly is exceptionally important, because, as we continue to build on the achievements of previous years, the international environment and sustainable development agenda will need to be tightly focused, with a common objective, in the process leading up to the full review conference on the overall implementation of the UNCED outcomes by the General Assembly in 1997.

The Federated States of Micronesia became deeply involved in the various UNCED-related activities as its priority when it joined the United Nations at the beginning of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We believe that the journey from Rio has had many significant milestones. One of the significant achievements is the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Programme of Action that emerged from the Global Conference is the first post-Rio effort to amplify the principles of Agenda 21 in a specific context pointing towards tangible measures for implementation. We are now at a stage when mechanisms have been established to give impetus to the implementation of these measures. With such mechanisms in place as the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Conventions on climate change, desertification and biodiversity, and the restructured Global Environment Facility (GEF), the international community finds itself ever more obliged to give the highest priority to the international environment agenda. All of these mechanisms offer a unique contribution to the collective international effort towards sustainable development in significant ways.

Much has already been done in our region to put into effect the commitments undertaken in the Programme of Action. At the regional level, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has been active in the coordination of a number of activities in the area of sustainable development, including a regional biodiversity programme funded by the pilot phase of the GEF. At the national level, despite many difficulties that my country faces as a small island State,

the Federated States of Micronesia has already begun to take positive steps towards sustainable development. As a first step, and in recognition of the importance of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, my Government has created a widely representative National Sustainable Development Board to monitor the integration of sustainable development policies into government action to assist with the analysis and coordination of projects.

We welcome the recent report of the Secretary-General on actions taken by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. With particular attention to paragraphs 139 and 140 of that report, under the heading "Institutional Arrangements", we especially call for the support of our developed-country partners for the creation of an identifiable entity within the United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, as called for in paragraph 123 of the Programme of Action. Resources are required in order to have this identifiable entity established and functioning as the focal point within the Department to provide substantive secretariat support, follow-up, monitoring, review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action. As the identifiable entity is envisaged as reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development and other relevant bodies on the implementation of the Programme of Action, it will ensure that the outcomes of the Barbados Conference are effectively integrated into the Commission's thematic programme of work.

My country also welcomes the cooperative and prompt efforts of the United Nations Development Programme in undertaking a feasibility study, as called for in the Programme of Action, on an information network and a technical assistance programme for small island developing States. While these feasibility studies are a valuable contribution to giving impetus to the attainment of the objectives and outcomes of the Barbados Conference, they should be seen as an information and technical network to move forward and complement the 14 substantive sectoral areas in the Programme of Action yet to be implemented.

I wish to point out that it was with recognition of the special vulnerabilities of small island developing States on global environmental problems, particularly with respect to climate change, biological diversity and international waters, that the Programme of Action specifically requested that the restructured GEF should be seen as an important channel of assistance in these areas, through the provision of new and additional resources. At the meeting of Heads of State of members of the South Pacific Forum, which was held in Brisbane, Australia, the Forum welcomed the restructuring and replenishment of the GEF and its intention to assist in the outcomes of the Barbados Conference.

We are not only the inhabitants of this planet, but also custodians of the shared resources which will be essential to the survival of future generations. It is in this light that we call for a strong partnership, to be seen not along lines of developed countries versus developing countries, but, rather, as a shared goal and investment for the benefit of the entire family of nations. As the Programme of Action clearly sets out the actions to be implemented at the international, regional and national levels, my country urges all Member States to support during the remainder of the forty-ninth session the overall outcome of the Barbados Conference, including all the enabling resolutions, which will give the specialized United Nations agencies and organizations the mandate to start implementing the substance of the Programme of Action.

Mr. Samana (Papua New Guinea): My delegation fully endorses and associates itself with the statements made by the Chairpersons of the Group of 77, the Alliance of Small Island States and the South Pacific Forum, who have eloquently expressed and conveyed the significance and the importance of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

We believe that the Barbados Conference was a major historical milestone which provided the impetus to the international community to demonstrate its commitment to the promise of Rio in 1992. It also offered a positive opportunity for greater participation and involvement by the international community in the important areas and issues of common interest and concern to mankind.

Papua New Guinea maintains and shares the view that the sustainable development of small island developing States and their survival depend critically on the cooperation of the international community for the full and immediate implementation of the Programme of Action.

Papua New Guinea is already in the process of introducing appropriate policies and legislative measures to give added substance to the Programme of Action and the realization of the overall goals and objectives of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

It has been realized, by many at the national and international levels, that the indiscriminate depletion of natural resources, and its adverse effects on the global environment and subsequent effects on climate change, pollution, rises in the sea- level and environmental degradation, is becoming critical, imposing serious limitations particularly on the development and the very existence and sustenance of small island developing States.

The small island developing States possess within their national and regional surroundings natural habitats that house unique species of flora and fauna.

The international community's recognition of the important role of small island developing States as custodians of valuable biodiversity is not only timely but indeed a positive step towards creating a greater opportunity for the attainment of sustainable development for the benefit of all our citizens.

At the Barbados Conference, a strong political message was sent to the world by the participation of our Governor-General, Sir Wiwa Korowi who, among others, challenged the international community to provide the necessary resources to implement not only the Barbados Programme of Action but also the overall outcome of the Rio process.

Papua New Guinea is of the firm view that the success of the Barbados Conference, like all other United Nations conferences, largely depends on the willingness of the donor countries to provide adequate technical and financial resources to ensure its full implementation.

The Programme of Action highlights a number of development strategies which are important in promoting sustainable development. More specifically, these strategies include, human resource development, institutional capacity-building, and the promotion of international cooperation in the transfer of technology, trade and investments.

Our existing foreign and domestic policies are geared towards achieving sustainable development, through the application of sound management practices in the exploitation of natural resources. This is done through the establishment, since independence, of environmental planning and protection legislation that sets legal mechanisms for the monitoring of environmental pollutants, against required levels, and effectively polices the activities of industry in terms of adherence to national environmental planning guidelines. This legislation sets limits, for instance, in the case of forest resources and parameters for sustainable harvesting.

The direct involvement of the international community as well as relevant United Nations specialized agencies is needed in order effectively to fulfil the various programme requirements and directly to support national and regional efforts and priorities. In this regard, we welcome the actions that have already been taken through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), particularly the Feasibility Study on a Technical Assistance Programme for Small Island Developing States, including two subregional workshops held in Fiji and Barbados.

We are also pleased to acknowledge a joint initiative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT), UNDP and the World Bank on an urban management and environmental sanitation programme in a number of South Pacific island countries.

At the regional level, a number of programmes have been initiated, complementing the international Programme of Action and including: the promotion of coastal area management; the efficient use of energy resources; increased participation in global research, assessment, the monitoring and mapping of climate impacts; the provision of technical assistance; the strengthening of disaster preparedness and institutional management; and the establishment of mechanisms to restrict the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes; and the monitoring of marine pollution.

Papua New Guinea has initiated a move towards the establishment of a regional convention on the prevention of the transboundary movement of hazardous and toxic wastes, which is now in its final negotiating stages and is expected to come into force in 1995. This, we believe, is a major step towards the overall management and protection of our environment.

Papua New Guinea has also embarked on an inter-island transportation project and has removed trade and migration barriers, with some members of the South Pacific Forum, to be consistent with the international consensus on the promotion of equitable trade and

investment to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Papua New Guinea is particularly vulnerable to potential environmental degradation, in the sense that 60 per cent of its revenues come from the exportation of mining and petroleum resources, including forest and fisheries resources. Ironically, therefore, these industries require the greatest attention and need to be monitored closely for any potential adverse effects and environmental degradation.

The National Government and UNDP is creating a National Sustainable Development Strategy which, *inter alia*, will oversee the implementation of the Programme of Action.

We therefore believe that the international community, working through and with the regional and subregional organizational mechanisms, can effectively implement the Programme of Action that will further strengthen and enhance international development cooperation in pursuit of sustainable development.

We look forward to the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on the implementation of the Programme at the next session, when we will continue to make constructive contributions to the work of the Commission. Thus, we would encourage the various agencies, including the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, to give greater consideration to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The success of the Barbados Programme of Action critically hinges on the positive support of the international community in the effective implementation of national and regional programmes.

Papua New Guinea looks forward, with a greater sense of confidence in our endeavour, to the realization of the goals of sustainable development pertaining to the particular needs and aspirations of the small island developing States as a prerequisite in developing the national and regional capacity to contribute effectively in our global partnership to ensure a better future for our children.

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): At the outset, my delegation would like to join previous speakers in expressing its deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Egypt on the tragic loss incurred as a result of the recent flood.

My delegation would like to congratulate the Government of Barbados for having successfully convened the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in response to the challenge we set for ourselves at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, and to thank those who devoted so much time and effort to preparing for it. The Programme of Action and the Barbados Declaration adopted at the Conference are indeed landmarks on the road from Rio. They provide fresh impetus to the work of the international community on the sustainable development of small island developing States.

It was a historic conference, in as much as it established a firm basis for directing the attention of the international community to small island developing States and the serious problems they face in achieving sustainable development. The Programme of Action is the first step taken by the international community to help them address those problems. Our next task is to ensure its implementation on the basis of the partnership created at the Conference. The Government of Japan, for its part, will be guided by the Programme of Action and by the spirit of the Declaration of Barbados in the delivery of bilateral and multilateral development assistance to small island developing States.

The Programme of Action emphasizes the importance of human resource development to the sustainable development of small island developing States and pinpoints specific issues such as education, training and research and development as being of particular significance. It also rightly emphasizes the importance of enhancing institutional and administrative capacity. This is an orientation that is in accord with the policy of Japan with respect to its development assistance to developing countries, one of whose major priorities is enhancement of self-reliance. There is a synergy that is produced when effective national efforts are supported by external assistance. Japan is determined to work to enhance that synergy.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on action taken by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action, and also for his notes transmitting the studies undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the feasibility of developing a Small Island Developing States

technical assistance programme (SIDS/TAP) and a Small Island Developing States information network (SIDS/NET).

As the Secretary-General rightly points out, the report should be considered to be of an interim nature. In view of the important role of the United Nations system, my delegation believes that it is vital to conduct a continuing review of plans and programmes for implementing the Programme of Action, and it therefore looks forward to further reports. In that connection, it would welcome the review of the Programme of Action by the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development suggested in the Secretary-General's report.

My delegation particularly welcomes and supports the results of the studies undertaken by UNDP on the SIDS/TAP technical assistance programme and the SIDS/NET information network. Cooperation is of vital importance in enhancing self-reliance by small island developing States, and both SIDS/TAP and SIDS/NET are designed to strengthen such cooperation. This, too, is a goal that is in line with the policy of Japan, which attaches importance to South-South cooperation in strengthening international cooperation for development.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to assure you, Mr. President, that Japan will make every effort to play an active role in implementing the decisions reached at the historic first Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

Mr. Balzan (Malta): I join previous speakers in expressing deepest sympathy and solidarity with the Government and the people of Egypt at this trying time, as they deal with the tragic consequences of the recent floods.

The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was convened in Barbados earlier this year, marked the first concrete measure emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The Barbados Conference successfully accomplished its task. It specified relevant policies within a framework of a Programme of Action aimed at enabling small island developing States to achieve sustainable development.

Unquestionably, credit must be given to the Government of Barbados for the excellent organization and to the people of Barbados for the cordial hospitality extended to delegations. Our gratitude goes also to Prime Minister Sandiford for the able and skilful manner in which he steered the Conference to a successful conclusion.

The delegation of Malta views the current debate on the report of the Barbados Conference as a manifestation of the importance the international community attaches to the well-being of small island developing States. My Government welcomes the report (A/49/425) of the Secretary General, on the action taken by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

While affirming the human and natural assets pertaining to small island developing States, the Declaration of Barbados did not fail to highlight the hurdles that need to be overcome. In aiming at the attainment of a better quality of life for present and future generations, the document adopts an exemplary wide-ranging approach.

Comprehensive as it is, the Programme of Action negotiated and agreed upon at Bridgetown addresses innumerable issues relating to the sustainable development of small island States, issues which have been repeatedly underscored and which have been universally recognized. In 1992, in Rio, the international community identified the particular problems faced by small island States as a special case with regard both to environment and to development. If not catered for, their size, geographic location and limited resources could constitute particular vulnerabilities.

At times, the size and geographic location of States in this category impose in themselves a number of economic disadvantages. In some cases, these disadvantages are multiplied as a consequence of natural disasters. In fact, vulnerability to external economic influences and ecological fragility are major concerns for small island developing States.

A reality at times overlooked was pointed out by the Governor-General of Barbados, Her Excellency Dame Nita Barrow, in her address to the Conference in Barbados, namely, that one sixth of the Earth's surface, including a significant portion of its marine and biodiversity resources, falls under the jurisdiction of small island States. This element is noted, more than as a matter of pride, because one cannot ignore its inherent implications or its impact on the world community as a whole.

Small island States are fully aware of their problems, but likewise cognizant of their responsibilities, responsibilities that, if shared, could be better addressed and more easily resolved. Hence the need to encourage and enhance regional and international cooperation.

History teaches us that small island States, in their effort to survive, have always invested in their human resources. This is one investment which has never failed. On the contrary, it has consistently yielded high dividends.

Malta, itself a small island State, is living proof that the best investment lies in the development of human resources. Innovative and traditional economic activities that have been undertaken have given our islands the impetus needed to put the economy on a sound platform.

Small island States, notwithstanding their diverse characteristics, have always played an important role in the multilateral process. Through their experience, gained in the course of their long history, they can continue to contribute to enhancing international political and economic cooperation.

The Convention on the Law of the Sea, which will soon enter into force, and the proposal to include climate change as an item on the agenda of the General Assembly — both launched by Malta — are two examples of the manner in which a State, regardless of its size, can contribute to the well-being of mankind.

In this context, my country welcomes the inclusion in the Programme of Action of its proposal to set up a vulnerability index to serve as a supplementary yardstick to measure the degree and extent of vulnerabilities in terms both of economic structures and of institutions.

A main agenda item currently being discussed within the Organization is the issue of development. Endless discussions at different levels have identified the basic elements necessary for socio-economic sustainability. The Assembly is expected shortly to debate the measures essential for the enhancement of development. The requirements and concerns of the category of small island States should not be sidelined.

Barbados does not mark the end of an exercise; rather, it signals the commencement of an ongoing process which monitors and ensures that the results obtained are consolidated and augmented.

Traditional wisdom teaches us that a problem shared is a problem halved.

As my delegation pointed out in Barbados, the involvement and assistance of the international community in resolving issues which may hinder or arrest the sustainable development of small island developing States have to be viewed from a much wider perspective. That wider perspective necessarily includes the inverse proportionality of the importance which small island States have in key strategic areas of the globe. Conscious as they are of the responsibilities and hardships which their sensitive location has often placed on them, small island States are in the forefront in championing dialogue as the unique tool for fostering greater harmony and coexistence.

Dialogue is at the root of any approach to the resolution of problems. Dialogue helps identify problems and stimulates solutions. Dialogue re-cements what conflicts often undo. In so doing dialogue demands as its basic element solidarity in action — solidarity which warrants a comprehensive approach; solidarity which should not be limited to mere words but should serve as the means to translate words into deeds.

Mr. Pierre (Guyana): I wish first to extend condolences to the Government and people of Egypt on the recent occurrences that have resulted in the tragic loss of life and suffering in that country.

My delegation is happy to register its concurrence with the statements delivered by the delegation of Barbados on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the delegation of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77.

The Rio Conference on Environment and Development gave the world perhaps its clearest signal yet that the problems confronting humanity are so grave and urgent that they require treatment at the highest level possible. That Summit was equally unequivocal in its emphasis on the unique nature and vulnerability of small island States and of low-lying coastal regions.

The situation confronting small island developing States in an increasingly competitive global economic and political environment is very aptly depicted in chapter 17 of Agenda 21. Small island States are indeed a special case both for environment and for development. They are ecologically fragile and vulnerable. Their small size, limited resources, geographical dispersion and isolation

from markets place them at a grave disadvantage economically and prevent the realization of any benefits of economies of scale.

In Barbados in April this year we met and deliberated successfully on the special circumstances affecting this group of partners. That occasion marked the first major substantive follow-up process to the Rio Conference and was unique for this and for its focus on a specific and important concern. Our task henceforth will be to pursue with equal vigour and enthusiasm the full and urgent implementation of the agreements and decisions reached at that Conference. Guyana joins in urging the full endorsement of the Barbados Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, contained in document A/CONF.167/9, now before the Assembly for consideration.

Important as they are, those agreements will amount to very little unless appropriate mechanisms are established for effective monitoring and implementation of actions on a system-wide basis. To this end, we believe that it is essential that this responsibility be appropriately located within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, as provided for in the Programme of Action. That Department should therefore be adequately equipped for the proper fulfilment of its responsibility for monitoring and coordination and for the provision of an effective support structure for the follow-up to the Conference decisions.

Two areas of critical importance to small island States are information technology and capacity-building that would enhance the capacity of those States to better utilize and harness the assets of their rich natural habitat. In this connection, the proposals for projects in the small islands developing States information network (SIDS/NET) and the small islands developing States technical assistance programme (SIDS/TAP) set forth a full scope of work. The efficient and prompt manner in which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has responded to a mandate given it to prepare studies on these proposals deserves our full commendation.

Those studies are contained in additional reports also before us for approval. Two noteworthy features of the projects need to be underscored: the emphasis placed on local capacity-building, and the utilization of indigenous knowledge. I urge the Assembly to endorse the report now before us and to give its full support to the action outlined therein.

The extensive preparatory process in which we were all engaged and the exemplary deliberations in the Conference itself and in its other processes, such as the meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons and the Forum of the Non-Governmental Organization, all converged into the highly successful outcome of which we now speak. Our highest commendations must go to the Government of Barbados and to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) for their roles and efforts in ensuring such an outcome. It now behooves us in the General Assembly to treat the implementation and follow-up process with equal seriousness and determination, in order to give true meaning to what has been accomplished.

Mr. Turnquest (Bahamas): Let me at the outset associate myself with other speakers in expressing to the Government and the people of Egypt the condolences and sympathy of my delegation on the tragic loss of life and damage resulting from the recent floods.

The Bahamas associates itself with the commendations made by other delegations concerning the successful outcome of the first-ever Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held earlier this year in Barbados. The Government of Barbados is to be congratulated for the excellent arrangements made for the Conference and for the care taken of delegations attending the meeting.

My delegation is pleased to endorse the comments made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77, and by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) on this important item. We also fully associate ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) by the representative of Barbados.

The Assembly has before it for its consideration the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as well as the Barbados Declaration. The Bahamas considers that the Programme of Action provides a blueprint for a comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainable development by small island developing States. It tackles the numerous issues that we as island developing States must address in our pursuit of sustainable development. The Declaration is a statement of our collective political will. It is really the reaffirmation of the commitments which were made in Rio. The international community is called upon to fully

support and provide the effective means for the implementation of this Programme.

While we view the Programme of Action as an excellent blueprint for focusing our efforts and commitments towards the sustainable development of small island developing States, it is recognized that the successful implementation of the Programme will need the full support of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development within the United Nations. We view the Secretariat support unit as a vital component of the implementation strategy. In this regard, the necessary resources must be provided to the Secretariat in order that it may fulfil the functions outlined in paragraph 123 of the Programme.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, and is indeed pleased with the initial efforts of the various development agencies of the United Nations system in including the Programme of Action in their respective work programmes. More importantly, it is noted that certain agencies have actually commenced activities which fulfil various aspects of the Programme of Action. In this regard, we commend the World Meteorological Organization for its activities and programmes in several substantive areas of the Programme of Action, particularly its specific programmes for climate change and sea-level rise, which represent a major concern for island States like my own.

The Commission for Sustainable Development has a mandate to review the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action within the context of its multi-year thematic programme of work. We are aware that due to time constraints, very little work was accomplished in the previous session. We are, however, hopeful that there will be an effective means for monitoring and reviewing the progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action. We assure the Assembly that, as a newly elected member of the Commission on Sustainable Development, we are committed to play our role in the work of that Commission.

In this connection, I am pleased to report that the Bahamas is in the process of establishing a national commission on science, technology and sustainable development. It is expected that the commission will be headed by an executive director and will be responsible for the follow-up of Agenda 21, the two Conventions arising from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the Barbados Declaration and Programme of Action. The membership of the commission will reflect a wide cross-section of the Bahamian community, including Government officials, academics, the church, business and industrial interests and non-governmental organizations.

My delegation is indeed pleased and encouraged to note the prompt response by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the mandates given to it at Barbados in paragraphs 105, 106 and 126 of the Programme of Action to support capacity-building in small island developing States. With regard to paragraph 105, the UNDP was directed to coordinate a feasibility study in collaboration with the small island developing States and relevant subregional organizations for the implementation of a small island developing States information network (SIDS/NET). However, while we view SIDS/NET as a means of enhancing human networking, which equips small island developing States with the capacity to respond to the priorities of the Programme of Action, it will be effective only if its information component is one in which we, as island developing States, are the primary generators of information for the network.

The United Nations Development Programme was also mandated, under paragraph 106 of the Programme of Action, to coordinate a feasibility study on a technical assistance programme for small island developing States (SIDS/TAP). This directive has been ably fulfilled by UNDP, as reported by the Secretary-General in document A/49/459. My Government is currently studying this report with great interest. We are pleased with the manner in which the study was conducted, that is, that there was close cooperation with the AOSIS core group of States, regional institutions, non-governmental organizations and the island States themselves. The Bahamas notes, too, the commitment by SIDS/TAP to involve as much as possible experts from small island developing countries.

The Bahamas wishes to raise one small concern, however, and that is that it be treated fully as a small island developing State. The existence of a relatively elevated gross national product per capita ought not to operate in the Programme as a bar to equal treatment. I take this opportunity to mention this point, as it ought to be borne in mind that several island developing States have now graduated from UNDP assistance as well as from concessional treatment by most other international financial institutions. We see this mechanism, therefore, as one where the excluding criteria would not be applied.

Small island developing States are noted for their species diversity and endemism. However, due to their small size, their relative isolation and the fragility of island ecosystems, their biological diversity is among the most threatened in the world. We take this opportunity to note that the Barbados Programme of Action contains agreement on action to formulate and implement integrated strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of such territorial and marine biodiversity, and in particular of endemic species.

In this regard, we commend the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for taking the leadership within the United Nations system in forging a new relationship between the United Nations agencies, a global partnership to respond to current and future needs of Member States in such areas as climate change and species protection. We are pleased to note that UNEP will be convening the first conference of the parties to the biodiversity Convention in the Bahamas from 28 November to 9 December 1994. We are confident that the outcome of that Conference will continue to focus the attention of the international community on small island developing States and their special needs and circumstances.

Although it is recognized that financing for the implementation of the Programme of Action must come primarily from national public and private sources within the small island developing States, it has also been recognized that implementation of the Programme of Action will require the provision of adequate, predictable, new additional financial resources. In this connection, we take the opportunity to urge the international community once again to honour the financial commitments made and to review our first full-fledged test of global partnership forged at Rio, by which the international community made firm commitments to work collectively to guarantee sustainable development. Fulfilling pledged commitments will certainly enable small island developing States to make operational the blueprint of the Programme of Action of the Barbados Conference.

Mr. Shambos (Cyprus): I should like to join you, Mr. President, and previous speakers in expressing profound condolences and sympathy to the Government and people of Egypt for the tragic loss in human lives and property caused by the wrath of nature.

Small island developing States, a unique and valuable component of our global environmental and developmental undertakings, have finally achieved their due recognition by attaining their rightful place on our agenda.

The culmination of this recognition was the convening of the Barbados Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held at Bridgetown from 25 April to 6 May of this year. My Government expresses appreciation to the Government and people of Barbados for the excellent conference arrangements, which led to the successful conclusion of that historic gathering, and for the warm hospitality extended to all participants.

The Barbados Conference itself can undoubtedly be characterized as a success. Its Programme of Action and the Barbados Declaration delineate the commitments of mankind to the survival and progress of this vulnerable and vital component of our globe's delicate and complex ecological and developmental balance.

The convening of the Conference is to a great extent an achievement that should be attributed to the dedication and persistent adherence of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) to the cause of the special environmental and developmental needs of small island States.

The Republic of Cyprus, itself a member of AOSIS, embraced at an early stage the just cause of this pioneering exercise and will continue to work for the realization and furtherance of its goals.

With regard to the activities of AOSIS, special recognition is due its current Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, Ambassador Annette des Isles, and all the staff of her mission, as well as to her predecessor, the former Permanent Representative of Vanuatu, Robert Van Lierop, the spiritual father of AOSIS, whose personal vision and extraordinary dedication to the goals set have made today's achievements an attainable reality.

The Barbados AOSIS Summit and its Communiqué, which was unanimously adopted, highlight the moral dimensions of this exercise and prescribe the political messages small island States are sending to the international community.

The Barbados Conference indeed marked a milestone in our history by honouring with commitments the promises of Rio to one of the most vulnerable groups of our community of States.

However, recognition and awareness alone will not suffice to cure the acute problems small island developing States are facing today. The degradation of their

environment, their vulnerability to the adverse effects of human-induced climate change, the rise in sea level and subsequent submersion of their territories, the imminent threats to their unique ecosystems and biodiversity contributions all emerge as urgent issues of great concern. Their primarily single-product markets, their small size and their remoteness from commercial, trade and technological centres, the fragility and small scale of their economies, their lack of adequate endogenous capacity for independent sustainable development, the vulnerability of their cultures and of their security and their exposure to pollution and natural disasters all aggravate the overall challenges confronting small island developing States. These and a host of other issues are of vital significance and of universal dimension, and call for concerted, effective action if we aspire to succeed in the global effort to save our threatened integrated environment and to achieve sustainable development for every part of our planet.

The international community agonizes over the indifference displayed about growing, crucial environmental and developmental problems and is focusing its attention on the implementation of the Barbados commitments and demanding concerted global action to ensure sustainable development in small island States that would serve not only island interests but vital global interests as well. Being at the centre of the international expectations in this regard, we should respond to the high aspirations of our peoples with the political determination to take concrete and coordinated action to eliminate the ecological and economic vulnerabilities of small islands and cement their significant contribution to the world's fragile environmental balance. This objective is of paramount importance and is fully supported by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, which has endorsed the principles of sustainable development and the decisions taken in Barbados.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the "Action taken by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" (A/49/425). We also welcome the Secretary-General's submission of the feasibility study of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on an information-sharing network for small island States; Cyprus was used as one of the case studies in accomplishing this task. We consider both the report and the submission of the study as significant steps in the right direction. The preservation and enhancement of what has been achieved so far in this vital area depend on our readiness to strictly fulfil the responsibilities and duties emanating from the Barbados documents.

I conclude with the plea that developing and developed countries work together to fulfil our obligations to present and future generations so that this globe, our common home, is not only preserved but also ameliorated in order to secure the continuity of life itself. It is in this just endeavour that the small island States could and should play a leading role. Let us all act collectively to ensure the survival of humankind in an environment conducive to human dignity and prosperity all over the globe.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I wish first of all to convey to the Government and the people of Egypt Brazil's heartfelt condolences on the tragic events in that country a few days ago.

My delegation would like to express its gratitude to the people and the Government of Barbados for its gracious hospitality last April during the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. In particular, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Erskine Sandiford, former Prime Minister of Barbados, President of the Conference, and Ambassador Penelope Wensley, whose guidance of the work of the Main Committee of the Conference was fundamental to the importance and scope of the decisions taken in Barbados.

In June 1992 Brazil had the honour to host the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). On that occasion, in Rio, the links between legitimate development goals, environmental concerns and the well-being of future generations were thoroughly established and developed.

The Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island States, which emanated from the decisions taken at UNCED, undoubtedly represented a step ahead and a most significant milestone in the process of mobilizing international efforts towards sustainable development. It was encouraging to note that the Conference in Bridgetown went beyond examining general questions related to sustainable development by adding original input to specific concerns that affect small island States.

The characteristics of small island States and their susceptible ecosystems have made us recognize their

great significance to our planet. Although those States are afflicted by economic difficulties and confronted by development imperatives similar to those of developing countries in general, small island developing States have their own peculiar vulnerabilities and characteristics, and the difficulties they face in the pursuit of sustainable development are particularly severe and complex.

Brazil is well aware of this uniqueness and considers that small island developing States represent a special case for sustainable development, worthy of concerted international attention. The potential of the small island developing States has been recognized. Nevertheless, they are still faced with the challenge of ensuring that their resources are used in a sustainable way for the well-being of present and future generations.

In this regard, my delegation looks forward to the full implementation of both Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action formulated in Barbados. We consider that the Programme of Action represents a basis for action in the agreed priority areas and defines a number of measures and policies related to environmental and development planning that have to be undertaken by small island developing States with the cooperation and assistance of the international community.

Moreover, the Programme of Action outlines the international community's role in providing access to adequate, predictable and additional financial resources, in optimizing the use of existing resources and mechanisms and in adopting measures to support endogenous capacity-building, specifically for the promotion of the access of small island developing States to environmentally sound mechanisms and technology. The Alliance of Small Island States should be warmly congratulated on the important achievements of Bridgetown.

In establishing the basis for a new global partnership for sustainable development, States have acknowledged their common but differentiated responsibilities in respect of global environmental degradation, so that the most environmentally vulnerable will be given priority. The international community therefore has to meet the obligations taken on in Barbados towards small island developing States, for they are the most vulnerable among us and could very well be the first to bear the negative environmental impact of ill-conceived development.

Unfortunately, the international community is apparently still reluctant to meet its financial obligations. Less than 10 per cent of the funding for environment-related programmes and projects agreed on at UNCED has been forthcoming. The financial level at which the Global Environment Facility has been renegotiated is equally discouraging.

My delegation believes that providing small island developing States with the required material support is one of the most important means to enable these countries to achieve greater self-reliance in coping with environmental matters. It is in this context that we call upon delegations to foster financial support for projects and programmes relating to sustainable development. We understand that the implementation of these projects and programmes is a responsibility of the countries directly concerned. Nevertheless, the support of the developed countries, United Nations bodies and specialized intergovernmental agencies is of the utmost importance.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the study entitled "A Feasibility Study on a Technical Assistance Programme for Small Island Developing States" (A/49/459, Annex). This document outlines a viable facility to support technical cooperation between small island developing States. We are confident that similar studies will be prepared so that effective action can be taken with a view to implementing the decisions contained in the Programme of Action. My delegation fully subscribes to the recommendations contained in the study — especially those regarding the need for the bodies of the United Nations development system to assist the small island developing States in renewing existing activities to ensure that they become compatible with the requirements and aspirations enunciated in the Programme of Action as a whole.

We believe that the post-cold-war world provides us with ample room for new partnerships in the field of genuine cooperation between developing and developed States to effect sustainable development. It is fundamental that the United Nations system and the international community as a whole support the efforts deployed in such a task and that the parameters set at the Barbados Conference to promote the ideals of sustainable and environmentally sound development ensure that the question of adopting mechanisms to guarantee developing States access to the new environmental technologies on favourable terms continue to be addressed on a priority basis.

We consider that the Declaration and the Programme of Action emanating from Barbados derive from Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the Convention

on Biological Diversity, which must continue to be our beacons. Let us abide by them, for we are certain that small island developing States, given appropriate assistance by the international community, can and will implement relevant plans and programmes to support their development.

I wish, in conclusion, to quote words used by Mr. Henrique Brandão Cavalcanti, Minister for the Environment of Brazil, in his statement at the opening session in Barbados:

> "The objective of our common effort is, of course, sustainable development. That is nothing but a change in the present patterns of utilization of the Earth's resources in order to achieve sound economic progress without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same, and we must continue to pursue the removal of all obstacles to the attainment of sustainable development."

I must, therefore, stress the great importance of the Barbados Global Conference and call upon the international community to honour the commitments to a new partnership that were undertaken both in Rio and in Bridgetown.

Mr. Bivero (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I should like to convey Venezuela's condolences to the people and the Government of Egypt following the tragic natural disaster in their country.

The outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which took place in Bridgetown, Barbados, earlier this year, are of great importance to Venezuela. The Barbados Declaration and Programme of Action flowed from Agenda 21 in an area that is of particular interest to Venezuela, which has an extensive continental and island coastline on the Caribbean. We share with the small island developing countries of the Caribbean geographical and environmental realities, as well as the obligation to promote sustainable development in our subregion. Venezuela supports the Barbados Programme of Action and would like to reiterate that it is committed to making a contribution to achieving the aims stated therein.

Although the self-sufficiency objective of the Barbados Programme of Action is commendable, the Programme acknowledges the need for the support of the community of donor countries. The channelling of additional funds for regional and interregional cooperation into support activities is turning out to be critical at this stage. We share the objective of the acquisition of new and additional resources, and we are convinced that the implementation of the Programme of Action will demonstrate the need for them in the medium term and in the long term.

In our opinion, capacity-building and the study on a technical assistance programme that was undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme in fulfilment of the request contained in the Programme of Action are of paramount importance at the initial stage.

Venezuela will consider how it might strengthen its support for the Programme.

As Venezuela's Minister for Foreign Affairs indicated during the high-level segment of the Barbados Conference,

> "Venezuela adheres to the Barbados Declaration and considers itself bound by and committed to the Programme of Action."

There are many examples of the way in which global interdependence and shared responsibility have shed light on the problems of the small island developing countries. Only by working together can we benefit from our experiences and try to combine our efforts to solve these problems. To this end, the greatest assets are the human resources of the developing island countries themselves and of other countries whose national development processes are similar to ours, the United Nations system and the community of donor countries.

We now have a comprehensive framework within which to contribute towards supporting the efforts of the small island developing countries. The Barbados Programme of Action will be a milestone in the process of implementing Agenda 21, both politically and economically. We trust that the international community, bilaterally and multilaterally, will respond constructively to this challenge.

Mr. Razali (Malaysia): We all share the concerns of the small island developing States regarding their unique vulnerabilities. These range from economic and ecological difficulties to security challenges. In recognition of the urgent need to address the threats to the survival of small island developing countries, the United Nations, together with the Government of Barbados, hosted the Global Conference on the

Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Barbados in April-May 1994. Malaysia was represented at ministerial level, as we wanted to demonstrate our solidarity with and our support for the small island developing States.

The Barbados Conference adopted a comprehensive Programme of Action, which addresses the range of issues that affect the small island developing States. The Programme of Action, which contains 15 chapters, serves as the basis of and provides a blueprint for the sustainable development of small island developing States. It must be implemented, in full and in a timely manner.

The Barbados Conference has a special meaning for all of us as, following the Rio Conference, it was the first global meeting, in implementation of Agenda 21, devoted to the question of sustainable development. The implementation of the Barbados commitments would be an important indicator of our collective determination to pursue global sustainable development.

Malaysia considers Chapter XV of the Programme of Action, which relates to implementation, monitoring and review of the programme at the national, regional and international levels, as the most important chapter. Although the implementation of policies and programmes to achieve sustainable development is primarily the responsibility of the countries concerned, the support of the developed countries, United Nations bodies and the specialized intergovernmental bodies is essential. Indeed, this commitment was underscored at the Rio Summit in June 1992. In this regard, the developed countries should honour their commitments made at Rio by supporting the endeavours of the developing countries through the provision of new and additional financial resources and environmentally sound technologies on concessional and preferential terms and through avoidance of resort to environmental conditionalities on trade and development.

Chapter 15 of the Programme of Action also recognizes small island developing States' dependence on overseas markets for value-added exports in areas in which they are internationally competitive and their need to develop those markets. In the area of international trade, the small island developing States face the same problems as do other developing countries with regard to unjustified and unilateral impediments that erode the competitive advantage of developing countries.

While we all need to make the transition to sustainable development, the bulk of the burden of change should not be placed on the developing countries, including the small island States. As it is, the developed countries already possess and enjoy competitive advantages in technology, access to markets and capital and management skills, compared with the severe handicaps of the small island developing States, such as unfavourable terms of trade and prohibitive costs of transportation, arising from their distance and isolation from international shipping routes.

Of no less importance is chapter XIV, which focuses on human-resource development. In this respect, Malaysia is committed to the promotion of South-South cooperation, by which we share and exchange experiences on development matters, especially human-resource development. In 1980 Malaysia launched the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) in order to provide technical assistance to other developing countries. The MTCP consolidates various forms of technical cooperation in areas where Malaysia has experience and expertise. It is based on the belief that the development of a country depends on the quality of its human resources; hence its emphasis on the development of human resources through training. Malaysia's assistance under the MTCP is essentially in the form of training, conducted either at Malaysian universities or at training institutions. Other forms of assistance include study visits, services of experts, and the provision of supplies and equipment for socio-economic projects. To date, more than 84 countries, including small island States, have benefited in varying degrees from the MTCP.

The small island developing countries could also benefit from participating in the projects implemented by the Group of 15 for the promotion of South-South cooperation. The projects involve training and exchanges in experiences in the fields of finance, trade, information, science and technology, environment and population. Malaysia has also actively cooperated through the Commonwealth, which has played a leadership role in addressing the concerns of small island developing States.

We share the growing concern of the small island developing States, as well as of other developing countries, regarding the transboundary movement of toxic and hazardous waste and the possible damage inflicted by foreign ships carrying toxic and radioactive materials through their seas. Such disposal of toxic, hazardous and radioactive wastes, as well as oil spills and desludging activities that result in the generation of hazardous waste, has a serious effect on both marine and land resources. In this regard, the recommendations contained in

chapter III of the Programme of Action, which calls for international cooperation to ensure the strengthening of institutions to provide assistance to Governments and industry in the adoption of clean technologies as well as in the prevention of pollution and the handling, treatment and disposal of hazardous wastes, should be implemented on a priority basis.

We recognize that small island developing States are in the front line of possible ecological disasters as a result of climate change. As the small island developing States are extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change, financial and technical support from the developed countries and the international community for monitoring impact assessment and adaptation is an urgent necessity.

The Secretary-General, in response to paragraph 106 of the Programme of Action, has circulated document A/49/459, which contains specific recommendations for technical assistance. The early implementation of these recommendations would mitigate some of the immediate concerns. At the same time, the presence of an entity in the Secretariat to monitor the Programme of Action would ensure that attention continued to be given to the threats and problems facing small island developing States.

Two weeks ago, in the Fourth Committee, we had the occasion to deliberate on the security of small States. A consensus resolution was adopted following the debate, signifying agreement to address the security needs — indeed, the survival needs — of small States. The economic, ecological and security challenges confronting the small island developing States must be effectively addressed to ensure their continued well-being. Our commitment, through the Barbados Programme of Action, to assisting the small island developing States will without any doubt contribute to the long-term sustainable growth, security and stability of small States.

Mr. Gallegos (United States of America): We also join in sending condolences to the Egyptian delegation on the tragic losses resulting from the recent devastating floods.

As the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States demonstrated, small island developing States are playing an increasingly active and better-defined role in diverse world and regional organizations.

The United States seeks to cooperate with island nations in the struggle to generate sustainable economic growth. The Barbados Conference, which addressed this issue, established an agenda to which we are committed. The agenda outlined steps that need to be taken globally, regionally and locally in 14 key areas. We intend to work with the international community to follow up the Conference in order to give its work real content and to activate the Programme it adopted.

The United States was pleased to take an active role in Barbados. We are moving forward on development of a coral-reef initiative, as explained by Under-Secretary Wirth at the Conference. The United States believes that, because many of the world's coral reefs are located in small island developing States, a practical approach to their protection would address key concerns raised in the Conference such as biodiversity, habitat protection, natural-disaster protection and climate change.

We are working to ensure the participation of developed and developing countries, international and non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector in this effort. In this regard, let us bear in mind, while considering the issues of sustainable development in small island States, that there is no substitute for private-sector economic growth. Whether one considers what sort of governmental economic policy to put in place, how to educate and train people so as to improve their lives or how to define the type of technical assistance to be sought from abroad, it is the private sector that will ultimately determine the success or failure of the policy. Good government can help, but chiefly in a supportive role, such as spadework organization, start-up infrastructure, the fostering of a positive business climate, and assistance in publicizing the opportunities available. Inefficient government, of course, can quickly do far more to reduce or prevent growth.

In addition to the important coral-reef initiative I have mentioned, my Government expects to follow up on the Barbados Conference in a number of other ways: through bilateral programmes, the World Bank, the regional development banks and other multilateral-assistance agencies.

We continue to advocate sustainable development measures, such as environmental-impact statements, energy efficiency and integrated coastal-resource management. We will work to ensure that the Commission on Sustainable Development undertakes the important reviews that will be necessary to ensure implementation of the Programme of Action.

Mrs. Hassan (Pakistan): On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, my delegation would like to express our condolences to our Egyptian brothers, especially those affected by the tragedy, on the loss of life and property in the recent disastrous floods.

My delegation had the great honour to participate in the preparatory process of the first Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and in the Conference itself. My Government's commitment to work with the small island developing countries in finding solutions to their difficult problems was evidenced by the presence of a special representative of Prime Minister Bhutto at the high-level segment of the Barbados Conference.

Today is yet another historic moment in the history of the United Nations, and especially of the developing countries. With the adoption of the Programme of Action agreed at the Barbados Conference, the United Nations will be on the way to implementing this important document, which is expected to directly affect the lives of many in the small island developing States.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Barbados on the success of the Conference. Our deep admiration also goes to Ambassador Annette des Iles, the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, for her stewardship in articulating the viewpoint of the developing countries at the Conference.

Pakistan is not a small island, but we share common perceptions on development issues with our friends from the small island developing States. Our problems are similar in intensity, though they may be a shade different in nature. Pakistan associates itself fully with the views and aspirations of all the developing countries on issues related to the environment and development, and therefore the outcome of the Barbados Conference was extremely important to us. We are convinced that the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference will go a long way in determining the path to be adopted by other developing countries in the pursuance of sustainable development objectives.

Awareness of environmental issues has grown over the past two decades. This awareness has emerged among and within Governments as they have addressed environmental problems singly, bilaterally, regionally and globally. Despite Rio and the apparent shared perceptions regarding environmental problems and actions, environmental degradation has continued unabated, threatening human well-being and, in some instances, the very survival of life on our planet. Environmental issues are the urgent concern of all peoples of the world. They demonstrate in a dramatic way the need for international cooperation.

The high-level segment of the Conference, entitled "Forging partnerships for sustainable development", provided an opportunity for statesmen and high-level representatives to come together and discuss in a frank and open manner whether the commitments made at Rio had led to the forging of a new global partnership for sustainable development. Rio started a realistic process, and the results of the Earth Summit provided a solid base for decisive action based on this new partnership.

It was evident during the discussions in the high-level segment that, while Rio had laid the foundations of this partnership, the destructive patterns of human consumption and production were continuing unabated. Less than 20 per cent of the world's population in the developed countries continue to use 80 per cent of the world's resources. Their decades of unplanned industrialization and unsustainable methods of production and the exploitation of resources without any regard for the future have contributed to the deterioration of the environment, causing environmental changes that threaten the very existence of some small islands.

Small islands are truly, in the words of David Herbert Lawrence,

> "vivid fragments of life (...) they are a celebration, in the sea".

The beauty that surrounds us in an island is, however, threatened by an in-built fragility and vulnerability to the forces of nature, as well as by human and environmental degradation. The Barbados Conference achieved one of its objectives: sensitizing the international community to the problems of the small island developing countries as "high-risk entities".

The gross national product of some small island developing States may place a small number of them among middle-income economies. However, such criteria are certainly extremely deceptive. The sustainability of the economic base of even the most affluent among the small islands cannot be assured, in view of their special circumstances. The international community must recognize this fact. The Programme of Action

acknowledges that the small island developing States face peculiar environmental and development challenges.

Pakistan is extremely sensitive to the vulnerabilities of the small island developing States, whose small size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and isolation from markets place them at a disadvantage economically. They are vulnerable to global warming and rise in sea levels, with certain low-lying islands facing the increasing threat of the loss of their entire national territories. The frequency of natural disasters has caused major setbacks to the socio-economic development of the small islands. Pakistan was honoured to participate in the process of designing sustainable development plans and programmes tailored to the specific needs of the island States.

Pakistan is committed to making sustainable development a reality. We are fully cognizant of the fact that there is a great need to integrate economic and environmental priorities at the national level. Similarly, global efforts are required to address environmental and development issues in an integrated manner.

The efforts of the small island developing countries to sensitize the international community to their problems deserve our admiration. Despite their limited human resources at United Nations Headquarters, they have been able to garner the support of the international community for a Programme of Action that could be the first concrete step towards the implementation of the recommendations of Agenda 21 as they relate to the small islands.

The small island developing States require immediate action and attention. Even a day lost in launching the implementation of the Programme of Action would exact a heavy price, especially for those small islands whose very existence is threatened by the forces of nature. At the Barbados Conference the international community, through the adoption of the Programme of Action, recognized that the small island developing States face peculiar environmental and developmental problems.

The implementation of the Programme of Action will require additional financial commitments, both by national Governments and the international community. The expectation that such resources can be made available merely through a re-ordering of priorities is certainly not a realistic one. Most of the islands have small economies, with a great degree of built-in unpredictability, whether due to natural forces or to the structure of the economy. It is difficult to expect that such economies would be able to generate the extra resources without external financial assistance.

The adoption of the Programme of Action by the General Assembly will be another step towards the new global partnership and a reaffirmation by the international community of its responsibility to assist the small island developing States in their own endeavours to assure a secure and predictable lifestyle to their people.

To conclude, we hope that the Programme of Action will allow for the development of appropriate strategies by the small island developing States that will enable them to pursue their sustainable development goals despite their natural vulnerabilities. It also provides other developing countries with an identifiable framework within which South-South activities can be carried out. While South-South cooperation is an important mechanism for learning from the experiences of the developing countries, the concept of international responsibility as included in Agenda 21 must not be allowed to erode.

The developed countries have an important role to play in assisting the small island developing countries in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The follow-up process in the Commission for Sustainable Development will ensure the full participation of all countries in the implementation of the Programme of Action. We assure our friends from the small island developing States of our complete and full support to achieve the objectives of the Programme of Action and the Declaration of Barbados.

Mr. Isakov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): At the outset, on behalf of the Russian delegation, I wish to join in the expressions of sympathy on the tragedy suffered by the people and the Government of Egypt in the recent flooding.

The Barbados Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States marked an important step forward in the implementation of the decisions of the Rio de Janeiro Conference. In our view, the Programme of Action agreed upon in Barbados has practical significance for a purposeful solution to the problems of preserving the small islands' unique ecosystems and of stimulating their economic development. The Programme of Action's extensive measures in such areas as natural disaster prevention and preparedness, the safe removal of toxic and other wastes, the preservation of marine coastal and land resources, the

sustainable provision of clean drinking water, the diversification of sources of energy production and "disciplined" tourism, as we see it, are all intended to ensure a more economical and attentive attitude on the part of national Governments and the international community towards the integrated problems of island development.

One important area in which the island States can exploit their own efforts, coupled with international assistance, is the development of human potential in such areas as the preservation of culture, raising educational levels and the provision of housing and medical services.

Of special significance is the active use of modern scientific, technical and information potential capable of ensuring the expanded use of environmentally safe and inexpensive technologies, especially in the areas of agriculture, energy, public health and effective monitoring of the environment. In this connection, the Russian delegation notes its readiness to establish and develop cooperation with the small island States in those areas. The sustainable development interests of those States would be served by the applied use of my country's scientific research and practical experience in building a "small economy", preserving the diversity and uniqueness of the cultures of the indigenous peoples of Russia, developing coastal infrastructures and protecting the living resources of the sea.

I should like to express the hope that the implementation called for at the Barbados Conference of practical approaches and joint efforts for the survival and development of islands throughout the world's oceans and seas will be accompanied by the necessary political will and an awareness of common responsibilities for preserving the uniqueness of our planet.

Mr. Pursoo (Grenada): I should first like to join previous speakers in conveying condolences to the Government and the people of Egypt on the loss of life and property caused by the recent flood in that country.

Grenada associates itself with the statements made by the Chairman of the Group of 77; Ambassador Annette des Iles, Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States; and the Minister of Tourism of Barbados, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

In reaffirmation of the importance of Agenda 21 and in recognition of the special circumstances confronting the development of small island developing States, the United Nations convened the first ever Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994. It afforded small island developing States the opportunity to bring before the world community observations and studies of the specific characteristics which adversely affect their ability to achieve sustainable development. The Conference generated a global effort which produced a Programme of Action to address the areas of priority to sustainable island development. Grenada wishes to reiterate its deep appreciation to the organizers and participants of the Conference — in particular the United Nations and the host country, Barbados — and for the follow-up arrangements in progress, especially the SIDS/TAP and SIDS/NET initiatives undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme. We also wish to express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports and notes contained in documents A/49/425 and its addendum, A/49/414 and A/49/459.

There exist similar programmes of action, but such programmes in themselves are no guarantee of a solution to the problems they address. In this specific case, political will and financial means are the two most vital ingredients, without which the Global Conference's Programme of Action would most likely go the way of several of its predecessors — into oblivion. But the spirit of cooperation which was born in Rio at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992, and the overall realization of global interdependence in conjunction with the common but differentiated responsibility to secure the welfare of all constituencies of our planet, give reason for hope.

The successful implementation of the Programme of Action of the Barbados Conference holds out specific development benefits to small island developing States and indeed represents their hope. But failure successfully to implement this Programme of Action could lead to a void that could in turn entail setbacks and disruptions far beyond the shorelines of those islands. The problems of small island developing States are indeed a matter of global concern and therefore the solution to those problems must of necessity be in large measure global in scope.

The Programme of Action did not seek to address all the problems, development options and special needs of small island developing States. Instead, it addressed those that were deemed most critical, most essential and most feasible. It has been intentionally fashioned to lead to ease of implementation.

The disadvantages characteristic of the development of small island developing States are severe and numerous — the prospects and options are but few. The protection of our environment, the sustainable exploitation of our scant resources and the enhancement of our institutional and administrative capacities require at this time the forging of new and special partnerships.

Grenada wishes to express its appreciation to the donor countries, organizations and bodies within and outside the United Nations system that have responded to the special needs of small island developing States and have pledged continued support. Small island developing States have been made to understand that "aid fatigue" is wearing thin the resolve, and taxing the will, of traditional assistance processes.

We have been urged to be more creative in dealing with the constraints, challenges, prospects and options facing our countries. Small island developing states are truly appreciative of such encouragement, for we are cognizant that chronic dependency on aid can lead to an acquired immunity deficiency syndrome, to the detriment of the health of our economies. And so our economic development objectives are guided by the need to achieve self-sufficiency and genuine sustainability within the framework of global interdependence.

At the same time, the international economic environment of the 1990s stresses competition, a circumstance which increases the uncertainty of small island developing States; for global competition in the 1990s demands technological competence, and it is no secret that, among the several handicaps that adversely affect the economic development of small island developing States, the lack of technological capacity ranks high. Traditionally, small island developing States have acted responsibly in taking care of themselves, but globalization and technological developments have brought new challenges which require specific assistance merely to cope. Global cooperation to ensure the successful implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States remains a vital contribution to the hope of small island developing States.

The President: We have heard the last speaker on this item.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Assembly at its 30th plenary meeting, action on this sub-item will be taken in the Second Committee.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 89.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.

United Nations

A/49/PV.54

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

54th Meeting
Tuesday, 8 November 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Arystanbekova, (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 15 *(continued)*

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

The President: This morning the General Assembly will proceed to the election of 18 members of the Economic and Social Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 1994.

The 18 outgoing members are: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Italy, Kuwait, Madagascar, the Philippines, Poland, Suriname, Swaziland and the United States of America.

I should like to remind members of the Assembly that, as of 1 January 1995, the following States will continue to be represented on the Economic and Social Council: Bahamas, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Zaire and Zimbabwe. The names of those 36 States should therefore not appear on the ballots.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 2847 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971, and taking into account the number of States which will remain members of the Council after 1 January 1995, the 18 members should be elected as follows: five from African States, four from Asian States, two from Eastern European States, three from Latin American and Caribbean States and four from Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect this pattern.

I should like to inform the Assembly that the candidates receiving the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, and not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, will be declared elected. In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates which have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

94-86962 (E)

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The President: In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

I call on the representative of Ghana, as Chairman of the Group of African States.

Mr. Lamptey (Ghana): I am happy to inform the General Assembly that the Group of African States has unanimously endorsed the candidatures of Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Uganda, Sudan and South Africa for the five seats allotted to Africa.

The President: I now call on the representative of Turkey, as Chairman of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Batu (Turkey): In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Asian States, for the month of November 1994, I have the honour to inform the members of the General Assembly that Fiji, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Syria and Thailand have presented their candidatures for election to the Economic and Social Council from the Asian Group.

The President: I now call on the representative of Georgia, as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Aptsiauri (Georgia): In our capacity as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States, we have the honour to inform the Assembly that the Group has unanimously endorsed two States for election to the Economic and Social Council: Belarus and Poland.

The President: I now call on the representative of Peru, as Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Ms. Peña (Peru) *(interpretation from Spanish):* My country is serving as current Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. We would like to inform the members of the General Assembly that our candidates are Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica and Panama.

The President: I now call on the representative of Denmark, as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. Haakonsen (Denmark): In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States, I have the honour to announce that the following candidates have been endorsed by the Group: Australia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United States of America.

The President: In accordance with the rules of procedure, we shall proceed now to the election by secret ballot, taking into account the statements made by the representatives of Ghana, Turkey, Georgia, Peru and Denmark.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B", "C", "D", and "E" will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. Ballot papers containing the names of Member States that do not belong to that region will not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Hernandez (Costa Rica), Mr. Andresen Guimarães (Portugal), Mr. Hong Kee Choi (Republic of Korea), Ms. Diop (Senegal) and Mr. Dubček (Slovakia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 11 a.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	173
Abstentions:	0
Number of Members voting:	173
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Côte d'Ivoire	168
South Africa	168
Uganda	166
Congo	164
Sudan	156
Togo	2

Group B — Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	173
Abstentions:	0
Number of Members voting:	173
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Malaysia	148
India	129
Thailand	125
Philippines	108
Fiji	94
Syrian Arab Republic	44
Islamic Republic of Iran	14
Bangladesh	3

Group C — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	172
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	172
Abstentions:	2
Number of Members voting:	170
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Belarus	167
Poland	163

Group D — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	173
Abstentions:	0
Number of Members voting:	173
Required two-thirds majority:	116
Number of votes obtained:	
Brazil	140
Colombia	140
Jamaica	131
Panama	88
Bolivia	1
Nicaragua	1

Group E — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	173
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	173
Abstentions:	2
Number of Members voting:	171
Required two-thirds majority:	114
Number of votes obtained:	
Luxembourg	170
Australia	159
United States of America	159
Netherlands	154
Italy	1

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Uganda, and the United States of America were elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 1995.

The President: I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Economic and Social Council.

Since one seat remains to be filled from among the Asian States, we shall now proceed to the first restricted ballot.

This second round of balloting shall be restricted to those two States from among the Asian States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot — namely, Fiji and the Philippines. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

Ballot papers, marked "B", for the Asian States will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on those ballot papers the name of the State for which they want to vote. Ballot papers will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Fiji or the Philippines, and if they contain the name of more than one State.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Hernandez (Costa Rica), Mr. Andresen Guimarães (Portugal), Mr. Hong Kee Choi (Republic of Korea), Ms. Diop (Senegal) and Mr. Dubček (Slovakia), acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 12.35 p.m. and resumed at 12.55 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group B — Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	174
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	172
Abstentions:	0
Number of Members voting:	172
Required two-thirds majority:	115
Number of votes obtained:	
Philippines	106
Fiji	66

The President: Since no candidate has obtained the required two-thirds majority for the one seat that remains to be filled from among the Asian States, we shall now proceed to a second restricted ballot.

The representative of Fiji wishes to make a statement at this time, and I now call on him.

Mr. Seniloli (Fiji): First, let me thank all the States that cast votes for my delegation in the last two ballots.

I should now like to inform the General Assembly that my delegation wishes to withdraw its candidature from the next vote.

The President: I thank the representative of Fiji for his cooperation.

In accordance with the rules of procedure, we shall proceed to the second restricted ballot, taking into account the statement made by the representative of Fiji.

Ballot papers will now be distributed.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Hernandez (Costa Rica), Mr. Andresen Guimarães (Portugal), Mr. Hong Kee Choi (Republic of Korea), Ms. Diop (Senegal) and Mr. Dubček (Slovakia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m. and resumed at 1.20 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group B — Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	163
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	162
Abstentions:	4
Number of Members voting:	158
Required two-thirds majority:	106
Number of votes obtained:	
Philippines	153
Fiji	5

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority, the Philippines was elected a member of the Economic and Social Council for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 1995.

The President: I congratulate the State which has been elected a member of the Economic and Social Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in the election.

The following 18 States have thus been elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1995: Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Uganda and the United States of America.

That concludes our consideration of agenda item 15 (b).

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The President: I should like to announce that agenda item 32, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity", scheduled for tomorrow morning as the first item will be considered instead on Monday, 28 November, in the morning, as the second item.

I should also like to inform members that agenda item 26, entitled "Complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States", will be considered on Wednesday, 7 December, in the morning, instead of on Monday, 28 November, as originally scheduled.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.55

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

55th Meeting
Wednesday, 9 November 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Seniloli (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 112 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

The President: In a letter contained in document A/49/400/Add.5, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 20 and 26 September, 5 and 14 October 1994 and 3 November 1994, the Central African Republic has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 44

Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995: report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations (A/49/48)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions contained in paragraph 34 of the report of the Preparatory Committee.

I now request the Rapporteur of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Mrs. Lucille Mathurin Mair of Jamaica, to introduce the Committee's report.

Mrs. Mathurin Mair (Jamaica): It is my great honour and pleasure to introduce the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and to summarize its essence.

The first chapter of the report, "Background and introduction", recalls in paragraph 1 that the General Assembly in its decision 46/472 of 13 April 1992 entrusted the Preparatory Committee, consisting of the members of the General Committee and open to the participation of all Member States, with the task of considering and recommending to the Assembly proposals for suitable activities in connection with the observance of the fiftieth anniversary. It was understood at the time that all decisions of the Preparatory Committee would be taken by consensus.

The General Assembly has since received two reports from the Committee. Paragraph 4 of the report draws attention to the adoption by the Assembly in December 1993 of resolution 48/215 A, in which it approved the creation of the post of Special Adviser, at the Under-Secretary-General level, against temporary assistance resources for organizing and coordinating activities related to the commemoration, and also requested the Secretary-General to provide adequate Secretariat support for the Preparatory Committee. As a

94-86989 (E)

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result of the staff resources made available to the Preparatory Committee, the Committee has held 10 meetings.

I now turn to chapter II, section A, consisting of "Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary", and section B, "Drafting of a declaration". In its previous consideration of the matter the Preparatory Committee had been convinced that a suitable climax to the fiftieth anniversary would need to be identified. It should have universal importance, be enduring in its effect and have a suitable symbolic value.

Following consideration of this mandate, resolution 48/215 B was adopted on 26 May this year, when the Assembly decided to convene a special commemorative meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995.

In the same resolution, the General Assembly also decided that invitations to the meeting would be issued to all Member and observer States at the level of Head of State or Government, and that all heads of delegations would be afforded the opportunity to address the special meeting. The Secretary-General was entrusted with the responsibility of sending out the invitations requesting all Heads of State or Government of Member and observer States to advise him, as soon as possible, of their participation and representation and of whether or not they proposed to address the meeting.

The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at the forty-ninth session in order to enable it to recommend a precise timetable and agenda for the meeting as well as a timetable for the conduct of the general debate of the fiftieth session. The Secretary-General has issued invitations as requested, and will report on the replies received as soon as the necessary information is available.

In relation to that aspect of the Preparatory Committee's work — the invitations to Governments of Member and observer States, I wish to bring to the Assembly's attention a letter which was sent by the Chairman with regard to the issue of invitations. Paragraph 8 of our report states that at the 18th meeting of the Preparatory Committee the Chairman made the following statement:

> "With regard to the issue still pending before the Committee,"

that is, the question of invitations

> "I have conducted extensive consultations and I propose to send a letter, in my capacity as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, to the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which would read as follows."

The text of the letter, which was addressed to Ambassador Al-Kidwa, is before the Assembly.

It reads as follows:

> "With regard to your letter of 27 May 1994, I am pleased to confirm to you that the arrangements mentioned in General Assembly resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 for the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in addition to applying to all Member and observer States, shall also apply to Palestine, in its capacity as observer."

This letter was sent by Ambassador Butler, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. It was adopted by the Committee without objection, and it was thus agreed that the Chairman would forward the above letter to Ambassador Al-Kidwa. It was further agreed that it would be appropriate for the Chairman to send a letter to the same effect to other Observers, should they so request.

At its 4th meeting, the Preparatory Committee established an open-ended drafting group to prepare a solemn declaration to be adopted in 1995 to mark the observance of the anniversary. It was agreed that the declaration should reaffirm adherence by Member States to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and guide the Organization's work for the future.

The drafting group held eight meetings. Following its 2nd meeting the Secretariat prepared a note that indicated that during the discussions concerning a conceptual approach, consensus had emerged on five main points, as indicated in paragraph 11 of document A/49/48. They include the following:

"(a) The Declaration must address the ordinary people of all countries, a distinction must be drawn between people and bureaucracies and it must be clear in language;

"(b) It must not be grandiose;

"(c) It must have substance;

"(d) It should be based on a thematic approach".

The drafting group was entrusted with the responsibility of preparing a document that conformed to these considerations. It was also agreed that all decisions by the drafting group should be taken by consensus.

A subsequent meeting of the drafting group further refined the conceptual basis of the declaration and, as a result, the Chairman was able to present to the drafting group at its 5th meeting an outline suggesting the following elements: characterization of the event; reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter; and the need to implement the Charter in contemporary and anticipated circumstances in the areas of peace, equality, justice and development.

On the basis of this outline, the Preparatory Committee proceeded with its work. On 31 May 1994, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries submitted a draft text entitled "Draft Declaration to be adopted at the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations". At a subsequent meeting of the drafting group, the Chairman reconfirmed the two decisions agreed to by the Committee at its previous meetings regarding the basic outline of the declaration and its structure, namely, that it should be clear and economical in size.

At a later meeting of the Preparatory Committee, it was also agreed that the question of a draft declaration should be included on the agenda for future meetings of the Committee, pending resumption of meetings of the drafting group, which it was agreed would take place at the beginning of 1995.

I turn now to other substantive matters considered by the Committee, namely, the content of the celebration, commemorative programmes and activities. The Preparatory Committee has been brought up to date on the activities of the Secretariat with regard to world-wide commemorative programme development for the fiftieth anniversary. So the Committee has had the opportunity to consider the various programmes which are now being planned and to provide the necessary guidance.

Paragraph 16 stresses the strong view of the Preparatory Committee that the highest priority should be accorded to reaching youth. In that context, the Chairman of the Committee undertook to indicate to the President of the General Assembly the need for the Assembly to take action on the convening of a youth plenary as part of the commemoration, in accordance with Assembly resolution 45/103 of 14 December 1990.

The Preparatory Committee has also been briefed by the Secretariat on programme developments oriented towards children and youth including, for example, a global "teach-in" on the United Nations, which is in the planning phase. Its objective is to have all school systems designate time around 24 October 1995 to teach about the United Nations. The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, expressed support for the proposed global "teach-in" project.

The Committee has also considered a proposal from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning the creation of a United Nations fiftieth anniversary coin programme. This very important initiative will be the subject of a recommendation to the General Assembly at this session for its adoption. It is hoped that this programme will be endorsed.

As indicated in paragraph 19, the Committee has also considered a conference room paper containing a very comprehensive summary of global projects. They cover key programme areas such as education and youth; publications; film and television programming; media campaigns; discussion series and symposia; exhibits; concerts and public events; and commemorative items. All these projects are being overseen and coordinated by the Secretariat. Numerous additional projects are being initiated by Member States through their national committees.

The Committee was informed that the projects had been selected by the Secretariat from the several hundred submitted and were those that best met the overall objectives of the fiftieth anniversary, as well as the project guidelines and criteria established by the Secretariat. Some of these projects require both funding and executing partners, whether private, governmental or non-governmental, and these have been identified. Those in the developmental stage largely included projects for

which funding and/or executing partners still remained to be secured.

Paragraph 21 reminds us that the General Assembly has not allocated resources for commemorative programmes and events, and as a result, many of the projects under way are self-funded and thus reflect the availability of the resources of the executing parties. The Secretariat has recently begun developing some global programmes to be paid for out of funds raised for that purpose.

Let me turn now to paragraphs 23, 24 and 25, which contain information on the action that is being taken by Member States, including the establishment of national committees and the issuance of commemorative stamps. The Assembly will note that at present 79 Member or observer States have established national committees to coordinate preparations to organize the national commemorative activities, while another 29 have indicated their intention to do so. The Preparatory Committee has received information about some of the activities being planned by these committees, such as educational campaigns on the United Nations, conferences, the preparation of special programmes by the media, including major television stations and newspapers, the organization of essay competitions in schools, lectures, exhibitions on the activities of the United Nations, and the creation of commemorative items.

The Secretariat is working with the United Nations Postal Administration to develop a possible programme consisting of first day covers of commemorative stamps on specially designed envelopes.

With reference to activities within the United Nations system itself, the Preparatory Committee has taken this opportunity to highlight the mutually reinforcing goals of the United Nations and its sister organizations. So coordination of the activities of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system has continued to be ensured, mainly through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), and, at the working level, through focal points, representatives who have been designated by the specialized agencies and organizations.

In the past year there have been three meetings with the focal points in the United Nations system. In addition, United Nations field network and regional Commissions have been mobilized towards the commemorative effort.

As is indicated in paragraph 28, the Committee was advised that the ACC, at its 1994 spring session at Geneva, had further considered these issues, including increasing system-wide participation in the fiftieth anniversary and consolidating the messages that the Organization would direct towards the general public during the critical year 1995. The ACC has also decided to organize a special forum during its spring 1995 session to discuss the future of the United Nations system in the context of the anniversary.

Paragraph 29 informs us that the involvement of the staff of the United Nations is a very important aspect of the preparatory process. The Secretariat has been in contact with all staff committees and has regularly briefed the Staff-Management Coordination Committee.

Paragraph 30, in section D of Chapter III, tells us that the activities of the non-governmental organizations have been a very important element in this process. The fullest participation of non-governmental organizations is being ensured, and there has been a great deal of contact and cooperation between the Secretariat and numerous non-governmental organizations that are actively involved in the planning process at many levels. Communication strategies have been developed, and particular commemorative projects have been identified.

The United Nations associations have been active and supportive of global efforts to commemorate the anniversary, in many cases actually assisting and working with national committees and spearheading anniversary preparations at national and local levels. The Preparatory Committee had the advantage of being addressed by the Vice-President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations on two occasions. The Committee was thus kept informed of the myriad activities being undertaken by the associations.

On the question of the financing of the fiftieth anniversary, paragraph 32 of the report refers to the fact that the financial situation of the Organization precluded making funds available from the regular budget. As a consequence, the Secretary-General established a Trust Fund for the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations for that purpose and urged Member States to support that initiative. Support was also sought from the private sector, including a number of global sponsors and international licensees.

The Committee was advised that substantial progress had been made in securing global and project

sponsorships, as well as some additional generous individual contributions. Further resources for programmes would be received also as royalties from a limited number of items bearing the anniversary emblem, such as coins and a commemorative watch. As is noted in paragraph 21, programme development was significantly augmented with self-funded projects.

At the end of its report the Preparatory Committee deals with its recommendations to the General Assembly. In paragraph 34 it recommends the adoption of draft resolutions, to the text of which I draw representatives' attention.

Draft resolution I, which is entitled "Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", says:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Noting* the suggestion of the Royal Mint of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the creation of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary coin programme and its offer to manage that programme for the benefit of the Trust Fund for the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations and participating States,

"*Noting* the positive report of the secretariat of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations on the offer of the Royal Mint,

"*Noting* the potential of such a programme to provide the Trust Fund with revenue to support educational and communications activities about the work of the United Nations,

"*Agreeing* that the issuance of legal-tender coins commemorating the fiftieth anniversary would be a fitting way for States to honour and provide a suitable lasting memento of this historic occasion,

"1. *Endorses* the creation of a United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Coin Programme and the offer of the Royal Mint of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to manage that Programme;

"2. *Requests* the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements with the Royal Mint to implement the United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Coin Programme on a timely basis;

"3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to write to all States advising them of the programme and inviting them to participate by issuing a commemorative coin honouring the fiftieth anniversary."

Draft resolution II, which is entitled "Work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", says:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Having* considered the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,

"1. *Approves* the report of the Preparatory Committee and takes note of its work in 1994, including the progress of work reported in the open-ended drafting group of the Committee;

"2. *Looks forward* to receiving, before the end of 1994, the report of the Secretary-General on the responses received in regard to the special commemorative meeting to be held in October 1995, in order to enable it to recommend a precise timetable and agenda for that meeting;

"3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the secretariat of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations for its efforts to make this a global commemoration, involving, *inter alia*, national committees, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system and staff;

"4. *Welcomes* the commemorative programme being formulated by the secretariat, and requests that emphasis continue to be placed on the development of programmes addressing the general public, and in particular youth and children;

"5. *Welcomes also* the continuation of the work of the Preparatory Committee on the draft declaration for the fiftieth anniversary;

"6. *Decides* that the Preparatory Committee should continue its work and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, and/or during the forty-ninth session, as required."

It is my responsibility to present these draft resolutions for the consideration of the General Assembly.

The President: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 11 a.m.

I hear no objection.

It was so decided.

The President: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The consideration of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations provides me with the pleasant opportunity to pay a keenly felt tribute to Ambassador Richard Butler, Chairman of this Committee, for the outstanding efforts he has been making in carrying out the mandate entrusted to him and for the vision which he is continuing to develop in carrying out his work. I should also like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Mrs. Sorensen for her dynamic work, both within and without the Committee.

The report, which was so clearly presented to us by the Rapporteur, the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, reflects all of these efforts as well as the great interest Member States attach to the work of this Committee and, through it, to commemorating an event that has left its stamp on the modern history of international relations.

The interest shown by Member States in this event, which is much more than a mere celebration, symbolic though it may be, demonstrates first and foremost the expression of their dedication to the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the reaffirmation of the continuing validity of those principles which led to the founding of our Organization. These ideals and principles have made the United Nations the principal international forum for the preservation of peace and security and for the advancement of equitable economic development and a more universally shared prosperity.

Next year the United Nations will be marking its fiftieth anniversary. During the half-century of its existence, the world — and our Organization with it — has experienced changes that have profoundly upset the general pattern of international relations.

The international order that was established 50 years ago was strongly shaped by the emergence of new players and by landmark events such as the massive liberation movement that made clear the aspirations of peoples to self-determination, development, security and peace through general and complete disarmament as well as the satisfaction of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All of these advances, which represent genuine gains for humankind, have become the pillars on which today's international system is based, even if the full implementation of the purposes and principles of the Charter continues to meet with obstacles.

The United Nations unquestionably has played the role of architect and catalyst in these numerous changes, even though at certain stages its work, unavoidably, went through difficult patches.

The end of the cold war, however, did not mean the end of uncertainty or of disorder. The series of events that has taken place over the last few years was hastily perceived as representing the very first fruits of a new order based on the revival of humanist principles, in the context of which a renewed United Nations could truly play its role, as conceived by those who created it: that of a great coordinator for peace and the vehicle for fruitful international cooperation for the development of all peoples.

Reality, unfortunately, did not live up to this hope. Indeed, by adapting, for better or for worse, to their new framework, the international relations stemming from this outline for a new world order generated new reflexes, new approaches and new efforts and initiatives, without, however, righting the structural imbalances or warding off the resulting conflicts and tragedies.

The continued deterioration of the economic situation of a growing number of countries, in particular of the developing countries, is promoting the pauperization of entire strata of the world's population. This poses serious threats to international peace and security, since it is undeniable that islands of prosperity cannot indefinitely flourish in oceans of misery and privation.

It is clear that, even if the end of ideologies could make us believe that history had completed its development, the reformation now under way of international relations has not yet revealed all of its aspects. This has given rise to the fear of paradoxical consequences fraught with serious implications for all of

humankind, which only the building of a genuine solidarity among nations and within nations could effectively ward off.

We are called upon by the commemoration of this prestigious anniversary to reflect on all of these consequences and on the best way to control their impact. This event will provide a new opportunity which the international community must grasp.

The end of the bipolar balance and of the uncertain and tumultuous period to which it gave rise have provided the United Nations a warning signal to grasp all of the changes under way and to seek appropriate solutions to the numerous problems that continue to arise.

As a unique forum for concerted action and dialogue among peoples, through their Governments, the United Nations has a particularly significant role to play in controlling the future course of international relations. At the dawn of a new century, the time has come to provide new content for its objectives and to create conditions likely to provide lasting solutions to the great dilemmas of our time — the result of the complexity of economic and political considerations.

The declaration which is to be adopted by the General Assembly at the special meeting that it will hold to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should, to our view, regardless of what form it may take, take up all the considerations that I have just mentioned, which reflect the essential points of the aspirations of our peoples for a better future. It must be the starting-point for a renewed vision of the evolution of the international community and form the cornerstone of a celebration that will culminate in the holding of the special commemorative meeting, the scope of which must aspire to universality and have that positive impact that can legitimately be expected based on the faith of peoples in the irreplaceable role of the United Nations.

Algeria is ready to make its full contribution. It is already preparing to do so through the establishment of a national committee entrusted with organizing commemorative events, through which its people will experience, together with the other peoples of the United Nations, the intensity of the message of hope that our Organization bears. At the same time, national public opinion will be exposed, through the activities that will be organized on that occasion, to the sum total of the particularly rich experience of our country within the Organization, an experience whose landmarks are engraved in its collective memory and merged with its struggle for its emancipation and development.

Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda): I speak today on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) — the Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Jamaica; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; and my own country, Antigua and Barbuda — and Suriname.

When the United Nations was established in 1945 none of our 13 countries was independent. In fact the majority of mankind at that time lived under colonial rule. Despite the lofty principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, 17 years would elapse before two countries in the English-speaking Caribbean and then Suriname would gain their independence; 10 others were to become sovereign States in the 21 years following 1962. The process of decolonization in the Caribbean is not yet fully complete, despite the gains made. Nevertheless, the role played by the United Nations in the decolonization process has been one of its major successes.

Since 1945 we have witnessed empires crumble and medium-sized States disintegrate; we have seen the growth in the absolute number of States and the appearance of micro-States — as within the CARICOM. During the past 50 years we have participated in global technological change and wizardry too incredible to have been predicted in 1945. In our view, no other 50-year period in human history has encompassed such rich and unanticipated changes, defying the sages of all hues.

In the almost 50 years since the founding of the United Nations the countries of the CARICOM and Suriname have come to regard this institution as a force for good. Our United Nations has secured our freedom peacefully; it has provided technical and financial assistance for our as-yet-unfinished development; it has addressed with frankness many of the most pressing problems affecting small island and coastal developing States; and it has shown itself to be a willing partner in our future.

The United Nations has become mankind's most important global institution. It is evident that the vision of the founders of the United Nations is shared by our 13 Member States and their citizens despite our exclusion at the time of its creation. Given its achievements since its founding, our task is to provide the United Nations

with a greater vision, to secure its continued participation in meaningful change, while attempting to engineer that change and to guide it during the next 50 years of its existence. The vision of CARICOM and Suriname grows out of our domestic reality; we hope to participate in creating a world where there is equity among all nations and justice for all peoples.

Our 13 small and peace-loving countries practice democracy; we recognize its inherent strengths, and applaud the United Nations for espousing greater freedoms. For these reasons, our Governments have undertaken to ensure that knowledge of the United Nations and its principal organs is well diffused in our region. We are planning to participate in the global teach-in which is scheduled to take place on 24 October next year. Our radio and television stations will also be carrying special programmes, including cultural presentations, informing the public of the activities of the United Nations. Every attempt will be made to reach young people, especially through our schools. We wholly support the minting of a commemorative coin and will also explore the possibility of issuing a postage stamp. Our countries' newspapers will be featuring essay contests, and several regional and local magazines will also be giving coverage to the commemorative events. We are also planning a number of national projects, and will inform the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat about them shortly.

The office of the United Nations Information Centre in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, has done an excellent job in the Eastern Caribbean with its limited resources; it has kept the United Nations ever present in the consciousness of our citizens. The Caribbean unit of United Nations Radio has also played a very significant role in spreading the word. As a result of the years of preparatory work, we have, with ease, established a national committee for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary in virtually every member State. In several of our countries, including the non-independent, Non-Self-Governing Territories, private citizens have established United Nations Associations. The public and private sectors in our region appreciate the work of the United Nations and wish to be identified with the Organization. The United Nations is recognized as a force for good, globally.

The avoidance of nuclear war, for example, is of paramount importance to all the peoples of the world, because nuclear war portends such irreversible destruction and mass death. The small-island and low-lying coastal States of the Caribbean littoral equally fear the irreversible destruction and suffering which global warming and sea-level rise will inflict on our small countries. Just as the United Nations was instrumental in decreasing the threat of nuclear war, so, too, do the CARICOM and Suriname envisage the United Nations successfully persuading the industrialized countries to refrain from harmful production, wasteful consumption and destructive disposal patterns which may cause our innocent States to be destroyed. We are very thankful for the existence of the United Nations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of our United Nations is thus a time for celebration and reflection; it is also a time for contemplating the future. The CARICOM and Suriname believe that our future will be even more exceptional than our past. We believe that by the year 2045 the United Nations will have reversed environmental decline, succeeded at global disarmament, resolved the debt crisis, created a just economic order, arrested population growth, reduced poverty, empowered women, eliminated discrimination against other vulnerable groups and saved the world's indigenous peoples from extinction.

If that is to be our future, then we must be for ever vigilant; we must never allow our United Nations to become undemocratic or weak. We, the peoples of the United Nations, must stand united for a better world.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): Next year the United Nations, the only global multilateral forum, will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. This historic occasion will offer the international community an important opportunity to draw lessons from the past and to engage in an in-depth exchange of views on the role which our Organization must play in the years to come. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to this event and will actively participate in its commemoration.

Since the bipolar era ended, the genuine peace which the world needs so desperately has still not been established. Indeed, we have seen genocide, "ethnic cleansing" and other heinous crimes against humanity arise from border, tribal, religious and ethnic conflicts. In fact, our universal Organization is moving into uncharted territory. In order for it to play an effective role, the United Nations — particularly its Security Council — needs to be restructured and democratized. Bolstered by the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter, it is called upon to play an important role in the search for solutions to problems or crises arising in

various regions of our world. By taking concerted action, the United Nations will be working in the service of world peace and development.

By its resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994, the General Assembly decided to convene a special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995. Invitations will be issued to all Member and observer States at the level of head of State or Government, and they will all have the opportunity to speak. We support the idea that proper preparation for this event will mean doing everything possible to ensure that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary has lasting repercussions and great symbolic value. In this regard, it is important that the Member States, in their joint declaration, solemnly reaffirm the ideals and principles of the Charter and define the major guidelines for the Organization's action in the future. No less important is a heightening of the general public's awareness of the importance of the United Nations and its role in current international relations. The public's support and backing are clearly necessary if our universal Organization is to succeed in its undertaking.

Aware of the importance of the event, and seeking to ensure careful preparation for this commemoration, the Lao Government has created a national committee led by Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and composed of high-level officials from other bodies and ministries concerned: the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Information, the Committee for Planning and Cooperation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Telecommunications, Posts and Construction and the Ministry of Finance. Working closely with the resident United Nations coordinator in Laos, the national committee is now engaged in active preparations for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Together with the resident United Nations coordinator, we plan to undertake the following major activities: first, a commemorative meeting on 24 October 1995, which members of the Lao Government, high officials of the Ministries involved and United Nations personnel will honour the occasion with their presence; second, a reception marking this event; third, exhibitions of photographs covering assistance of international organizations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and activities of the Republic in various forums of the United Nations; fourth, sports competitions, including a marathon and football matches, between Lao officials and United Nations personnel; fifth, the issuing of stamps and calendars commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; sixth, the construction of a public park to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary; seventh, the broadcasting of television and radio programmes and the publication of magazines on the history of the United Nations and its activities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic; eighth, interviews with Lao leaders and the United Nations representative in the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 24 October 1995, the day marking the fiftieth anniversary; ninth, the sale of T-shirts commemorating the fiftieth anniversary; tenth, the distribution to children of toys and souvenirs relating to United Nations activities; eleventh, the publication of brochures and pamphlets on cooperation between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the United Nations; and twelfthly, the production of audiovisual materials on that cooperation.

With the support of all the Lao sectors and services concerned, this celebration is being prepared with great care. My delegation keenly hopes that the implementation of this programme of activities will contribute, however modestly, to the international effort to make this commemoration an event of universal importance.

Mr. Thanarajasingam (Malaysia): In less than 345 days, on 22 October 1995, our leaders will meet here to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Additionally, there will be other activities at the national, regional and international levels to mark that important occasion. These activities will clearly involve many and various players: Governments, peoples, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The occasion itself will be a high point in our continuing efforts to take stock of the United Nations — its past, present and future. An assessment of its past and present will be important in charting the future course of our Organization, which in many ways represents the substance and structure of multilateralism. For the vast majority of us who were not there at its inception, the fiftieth anniversary provides an ideal opportunity to help shape a multilateralism that will contribute to peace, security and development. The substance and structure of the multilateralism of the next millennium must reaffirm the ideals enshrined in our Charter. Multilateralism for present and future generations must address the concerns of all of us. It must over time resolve the inequities in

the multilateral system while ensuring people-centred development.

The Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, which was established on 13 April 1992, has continued to promote various activities designed to mark the occasion. These activities will have an important bearing on the public perception of the United Nations. A positive public perception would contribute to strengthening the United Nations itself.

Malaysia welcomes the recent resolution of the question of an invitation to Palestine to participate in the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State or Government, scheduled for 22 to 24 October 1995. Indeed, we were surprised that the question arose in the first place, considering the important developments taking place in the Middle East region.

We also wish to underline the need to continue the consultations on the draft declaration to be adopted at the special meeting. Document A/49/48 has detailed some of the salient elements pertaining to the draft declaration. For our part, we are ready to begin immediate negotiations on the draft declaration.

The various activities undertaken by the Preparatory Committee deserve the full support of all Member States. At the same time, those activities must reflect global diversity. The activities must be a true reflection of the theme of the commemoration, namely

> "We the peoples of the United Nations ... United for a better world".

We recognize that for the activities to truly reflect global diversity, there is an urgent need for the various national committees to play an important role. The priority task ahead for national committees is to heighten public awareness of the important role of our Organization. The continuing relevance of the United Nations must be emphasized and explained.

Malaysia, like a number of other Member States, has a national committee which has drawn up a comprehensive programme to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary. The programme encompasses the whole spectrum of our society, with stress on the young. The national committee itself is headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and includes members from outside the public sector as well.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes to acknowledge the full support extended by the Secretariat under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, and her staff.

Mr. Ahamed (India): At the outset I would like to compliment the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, who, with energy and enthusiasm, have put in a tremendous amount of work on the preparations.

We in India have already drawn up a comprehensive year-long programme of activities to be carried out between October 1994 and October 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The programme includes seminars, exhibitions, the broadcasting of special television and radio programmes, the publication of books, the production of souvenirs and so forth. We have targeted a number of activities specifically at youth and children, for whom we are striving to create a better world through our work in the United Nations.

The year-long activities to commemorate in India the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations were inaugurated on 30 October, the date on which India joined the United Nations 49 years ago. The Prime Minister of India, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, addressed the nation on this occasion. In his address, Mr. Rao noted that the United Nations has been a major factor in maintaining peace and in changing the world, slowly and often imperceptibly, into a visibly different place. He said:

> "India became independent within two years of the setting up of the United Nations. The two grew together, giving strength and inspiration to each other in a symbiotic relationship. Each was the product of a long struggle, one of the embers of a violent world war and the other of the sacrifices of a non-violent freedom movement.
>
> "The United Nations was founded on the age-old dream of one world, envisioned for centuries by enlightened human beings. Our foreign policy has been deeply influenced by the universal outlook of the stalwarts who led us to freedom. India and the United Nations worked in tandem, their policies in complete harmony and their goals held in common."

Speaking about the tasks ahead of the United Nations Mr. Rao said:

> "Eradicating poverty, providing employment and creating a just, fair and equitable international economic order are prime concerns of the international community. Peace and security, to be durable, require comparable levels of human prosperity across the globe. The United Nations cannot function usefully or effectively as long as humanity continues to be burdened with increasing economic and social disparities."

Reiterating India's commitment to world peace and the progress of all human beings, the Prime Minister of India rededicated India to the cause of the United Nations as the only vehicle for steering humankind to a better future.

Our delegation has taken an active part in the work of the Preparatory Committee. We are happy that the fiftieth anniversary secretariat has developed a comprehensive programme of activities. At the same time, we have noted that those programmes originate predominantly from the developed countries. It is true that the charitable organizations, donors and cultural institutions of the developed world enjoy the advantage of proximity to the United Nations and greater surplus resources. We also recognize the fact that most of the activities of the fiftieth anniversary are being funded by voluntary contributions or are on a self-financing basis. Nevertheless, we feel that there should be a balance in the programme of activities. The programmes should be universal in nature, reflecting the diversity of the cultures of the States Members of the United Nations. The fiftieth anniversary secretariat needs to reach out to the developing world.

Our delegation expressed the view during the Preparatory Committee meetings that programmes of a serious nature, beyond the celebratory aspects of the fiftieth anniversary, should be given equal importance. We would like to see more programmes, such as seminars, discussions and so on, involving scholars, statesmen and intellectuals. The outcome of such activities would provide valuable input for the charting of the future of the United Nations. Such intellectual exercises would also be useful for analysing past achievements and for drawing lessons from the past and the recent activities of the United Nations.

Our delegation is of the firm view that a declaration should be issued at the end of the Summit meeting in October 1995 as the finale of the commemorative activities. A declaration reflecting the thoughts and sentiments of our leaders on the occasion will be the most valuable memento the celebrations can bequeath to future generations. Our delegation has endorsed the draft declaration submitted by the non-aligned countries in this regard. We would like to appeal to all delegations to demonstrate flexibility and cooperation in working out the declaration for the Summit meeting.

In conclusion, our delegation offers its continued cooperation to the Preparatory Committee for the success of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations.

Mr. Yaacobi (Israel): At the outset, I should like to congratulate the President on his election. We wish him every success in conducting the Assembly's affairs. I should also like to express our appreciation to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and to Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, for the informative report the Committee has submitted.

Almost 50 years ago the framers of the Charter of the United Nations set great challenges by making a far-reaching commitment to the loftiest ideals of humankind. They stated that the Purposes of the United Nations include the following:

> "to strengthen universal peace;
>
> "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems ... and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms ... and
>
> "To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

As we review the past five decades, we can take pride in the United Nations impressive accomplishments and progress towards meeting those ideals. Yet we can see that the great task has just begun.

It is an unfortunate fact that only a minority of countries currently enjoy truly democratic systems. While democratization cannot be imposed from the outside, the United Nations can and should promote education towards democracy. Not only is democracy essential to full respect for human rights, but it is also a necessary condition for lasting peace, stability and economic and social progress.

The United Nations should be especially sensitive to this truth, having been founded in the aftermath of the Second World War on the ruins of a world laid waste by the forces of tyranny and fascism.

It is Israel's hope that the Middle East, in its search for peace, stability and prosperity, might become a model of hope for the entire international community. Despite many obstacles, we have recently seen in our region great progress towards a brighter future. This progress is based on direct, bilateral negotiations between parties that desire to replace conflict with cooperation.

The peace process began with a conference held in Madrid, co-sponsored by the United States and the Russian Federation. It was followed by bilateral negotiations on several tracks, by multilateral talks and by the Casablanca Conference on enhancing regional cooperation, in order to create a better economic and social reality for all the peoples of the Middle East.

As the prospects for peace grow, there is a need to devote more resources to social and economic development in the region. The United Nations, through such agencies as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has been contributing to meet the basic needs of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Now these and other agencies are making increased efforts in cooperation with Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the donor countries to change the human, social and economic realities in those areas. Such a change is a necessary basis for a changed state of mind, one marked by an unflagging commitment to peaceful coexistence. The United Nations role in the Middle East during the next 50 years will necessarily be affected by these far-reaching changes.

Over the past five decades the relationship between Israel and the United Nations has known both high and low points. The realities of cold-war politics created an automatic majority in the General Assembly that would support almost any initiative designed to single out Israel for condemnation. Such moves tried to make Israel an outcast from the family of nations. It is our hope that this blemish on the record of the United Nations will remind all States of the dangers of abusing this forum of peace. By repealing in 1991 the resolution which libelled Zionism as a form of racism, the General Assembly took an important step in demonstrating that this lesson is being taken to heart.

Israel has a noble debt to the United Nations. It was the United Nations which, on 29 November 1947, adopted a resolution restoring sovereignty to the Jewish people after 2,000 years of exile from their land. Then, on 11 May 1949, the General Assembly welcomed the new State of Israel as a Member State of the United Nations.

Following the 1967 six-day war, the Security Council adopted resolution 242 (1967) which affirms the right of every State in the area

> "to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".

The Security Council reaffirmed this right in resolution 338 (1973) adopted during the 1973 Yom Kippur war. In the light of the historic steps towards peace in our region, Israel has encouraged the General Assembly to avoid adopting anachronistic resolutions detached from the new reality. We welcome the progress that has already been made — the adoption of resolution 48/58 which welcomed the Middle East peace process and the agreements between Israel and the PLO and Israel and Jordan; the removal of contentious language and issues from other resolutions on the Middle East; and the elimination of obsolete resolutions that were contrary to the new reality. We look forward to further progress in this area, which would be a constructive expression of the United Nations commitment to the Middle East peace process.

Israel is pleased that its national preparations for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations are taking place in an atmosphere of increasing cooperation and improved relations between Israel and the United Nations. Our commemoration will include the printing of a special postage stamp and the convening of an international conference. We will devote special attention to cultural and educational activities aimed at informing the Israeli public about the recent positive developments in Israel-United Nations relations and calling for Israel's active participation in the United Nations system.

Israel looks forward to increased involvement in United Nations activities. Over the past year, Israel has participated in the civilian and humanitarian spheres in peace-keeping activities in Rwanda and Haiti, and in election monitoring in South Africa and Mozambique, and has made contributions in other areas as well. For the first time in over 30 years, Israeli candidates were

elected in direct elections to serve on United Nations committees and bodies.

Unfortunately, Israel has been refused membership in a geographic group at the United Nations and is thus barred from membership in all United Nations bodies in which the elections are based upon regional quotas of representation. As the United Nations enters a new stage in its existence, we again urge our fellow Member States to rectify this grave breach of the principle of universality. We urge them to help ensure respect for the sovereign equality of all Member States as envisioned in the Charter of the United Nations.

In ancient Israel, every fiftieth year was celebrated as a year of liberty and renewal. In Hebrew it is called "yovel", from which derives the English word "jubilee". As it is written in Leviticus,

> "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound... And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." *(The Holy Bible, Leviticus 25:9 and 10)*

May the jubilee of the United Nations mark a year of renewal for the Organization. May it be a year of peace and abundance, proclaiming liberty throughout all the world unto all the inhabitants thereof.

Mr. Elsafty (Egypt): My delegation welcomes the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, to be adopted by the General Assembly. We praise the capable leadership of Ambassador Richard Butler, Permanent Representative of Australia, who has been successfully steering the work of the Committee. We are confident that he and the other officers of the Committee will continue to play an active role in laying the ground for a very successful fiftieth anniversary. We are also counting on the hard work of Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Public Policy, and her staff who are coordinating a worldwide campaign in preparation for the anniversary.

Last year an Egyptian National Committee was established to prepare for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. We are looking forward to close cooperation between that Committee and the Secretariat for the United Nations fiftieth anniversary. At its meeting on 3 November, the Egyptian National Committee agreed on the final programme of work that will extend throughout 1995. The programme includes activities in many spheres. I shall not expand on the details of that programme but simply say that it will include activities in schools and the mass media — newspapers, radio or television. It includes the issuing of commemorative stamps and coins and exhibitions in Egypt and abroad. The Foreign Ministry will issue a White Paper and organize round-table discussions, lectures and United Nations models. In short we, in Egypt, will have a year full of activities to further the noble goals of the Charter.

There has been wide agreement among United Nations Member States that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should not be celebrated only by commemorative, ceremonial activities, however important they are in spreading the United Nations message around the globe. Two years ago, the General Assembly established the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary and everyone agreed that the Committee should also function as a forum to reflect on the experience of the United Nations throughout the past five decades. At an early stage the Committee agreed to start drafting a universal declaration to be adopted by a summit meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary. It is unfortunate that no substantial progress has been achieved towards that goal. We are hopeful that the drafting committee will expedite its work in order to finish the declaration before 22 October 1995.

We are also hopeful that such a declaration will review the past, assess the present and look to the future of the United Nations. We should opt for an action-oriented declaration which would meet world expectations of that occasion.

Fifty years ago, the founding fathers of the United Nations aspired to very noble objectives when they agreed to the Charter. They were determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and to promote economic and social progress. It is now time to evaluate the varying degrees of success with which the United Nations has helped mankind to advance towards these noble ends. We should also be able to answer certain fundamental questions: What should the United Nations do to respond to the new challenges to international peace and security? How can we further develop capabilities of the United Nations in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building? How can we turn the United Nations into an

> "international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples" —

a Charter objective that has never come to pass?

We shall celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations with the theme, "We the People of the United Nations ... United for a Better World". There can be no doubt that our world is better today than it was 50 years ago in many regards, as most people have been freed from colonial control, the apartheid regime has ceased to exist and no more nuclear weapons have been used. We can think of some other successes or success stories of the United Nations to tell. Unfortunately, we could also cite several failures and setbacks. On the fiftieth anniversary, we should make sure that the United Nations will contribute to a safer, healthier and better world in the future.

Ms. Vidal (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the founders of this Organization enshrined the motivation that inspired its inception in 1945:

> "We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights ... of nations large and small, and ... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

The past has shown us that, though we have learned about coexistence and respect for the integrity of each nation and each process, the road to tolerance and to the orderly development of a mankind equal and free from conflict is still long and painful.

The fundamental feature of the United Nations membership is its diversity, in linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic, social, political and other terms. This diversity, properly understood and harmonized, becomes a source of wealth that must be harnessed in our joint efforts to build a better world.

In the past, models of authoritarian domination prevailed in many parts of the world, such as colonialism or militarism. Today there is a clear trend to seek local systems based on participation and concerted action, and this trend must be extended at the regional and international levels.

There can be no doubt that the democratization of international relations must find reflection within the United Nations itself. As we reflect on the role of the Organization for the coming decades, we must bear in mind this fundamental trend towards a participatory community that constantly renews itself with new centres of development and of progress.

Since it is "we the peoples of the United Nations" and not "we the wealthy countries of the United Nations" for which this Organization was created, Colombia views with great concern the contentions put forward with regard to the restructuring of the major bodies of this institution.

History has constantly taught us that political and economic power is transitory. As we reflect about updating the United Nations in order to adjust it to the new realities, we must pursue the goal of creating a structure whose validity will endure in the coming decades. We must therefore not give in to the temptation of seeking quick formulas capable of only short-term solutions.

A creative, bold and flexible approach in keeping with the dynamics of these new and unexpected changes must be accompanied by matching actions and solutions. Only thus will we be able to keep up with the dizzying pace of a conflict-weary world on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

We are facing a new process of political change. History, however, is replete with such changes; it has demonstrated that power is fleeting and that no one people holds a monopoly on it. Today some have it; tomorrow others will. This strikingly obvious fact must guide our work within the Organization. Those who held power in the past do not necessarily hold it today; it is likely that those who wield it today will not wield it tomorrow.

Thus Colombia believes that only a participatory and democratic system, free of permanent privilege or category, will guarantee the durability and, in particular, the relevance of the United Nations.

Beyond merely political considerations, the United Nations in the years just ahead faces the challenge of how best to promote social and economic progress for all peoples. We are convinced that development is the basis for all other processes, including that of consolidating peace.

The United Nations must continue its military and civilian operations for the maintenance of peace, thus working to attain the most important of its purposes. But it must go beyond this, because although many such operations have been successful they do not of themselves create wellbeing, equity or justice.

We believe the time has come to take stock of the unquestionable achievements that justify the existence of the United Nations, but we must also recognize and analyse its failures. On this basis, we will be able to alter the course of an Organization which today has 184 Member States, composed with the 51 original Member States that subscribed to the San Francisco Charter.

The political, military and economic situation today is very different from that which prevailed in the post-war period. This requires an in-depth review and restructuring of the various bodies of the United Nations system to reflect the new international realities resulting from the end of the cold war: for example, the creation of new States; the increase in Member States, or those hoping to join; and the growing call for action to be taken by the United Nations — not only military, but also in vital areas such as humanitarian aid, the preservation of democracy, monitoring elections, defending human rights, environmental conservation, and economic and social development; to name just a few of the most important.

Beyond that, integral cooperation is another major pillar for the creation of structures to foster growth and progress. International cooperation must go hand in hand with effective and focused programmes at the national level. To achieve this, however, we need not force, but, rather, a concerted and united approach. The use of force is sterile when the aim is to generate wealth and development for all on a stable and sustainable basis.

We therefore believe that the United Nations, at a time when it is consolidating and strengthening its operations to promote peace, must also strengthen its capacity to act and respond in the field of human development, on the national and regional levels, so as to arrive at a fair and sustainable international system. The valuable resources of the United Nations must be organized more efficiently and used to serve the attainment of our common goal: a world in which human beings live in dignity, with respect and harmony.

In this context, we must intensify our efforts to evaluate problems and crises, while preserving the principle of peaceful coexistence. Otherwise, whatever we do, individually or collectively, will be ineffective.

Colombia believes that the United Nations certainly deserves an appropriate commemoration of its 50 years' existence. Though it can look back on both successes and failure, it is obvious that it has contributed a great deal to mitigating the devastating impact of the power struggle which has convulsed many regions. The struggle continues, to the extent that, as Alvin Toffler put it, industrial civilization is losing its grip on the planet as new forces destined to dominate the Earth are coming to the fore.

Therefore, the outlook is complex and full of uncertainty. We must work together to meet the expectations of our countries regarding the effectiveness of the United Nations. A concerted and cooperative approach, not diktat and confrontation, must be the Organization's tools over the next 50 years in order to make a reality of its significant, encouraging and splendid name, "United Nations".

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We are 11 months away from the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; 24 October 1995 has profound meaning above and beyond pomp and circumstance. It marks a unique opportunity for us to stop and think about the most universal body States have created. It is also an opportunity for us to take stock of our achievements and our limitations, an opportunity to examine the new situation in which our Organization now finds itself as well as the challenges it faces at this time, as we near the end of the century and are on the threshold of the next. After all, the United Nations today has 184 Members — over three times the membership when the Organization was founded. This increase has enriched and raised to a new level our relationships in this forum.

Above and beyond that, the work of the United Nations ranges from peace-keeping to the promotion of economic and social development, from protecting human rights to environmental conservation and from fighting drug-trafficking to efforts to achieve disarmament. As a philosopher once said, nothing human is foreign to it.

The international community is unquestionably committed to an exceptional effort to strengthen the Organization's machinery to ensure peace and security and the other fundamental pillar of its work — the promotion of development.

The changes the Organization has undergone reflect an order profoundly different from the one bequeathed to us by the post-war period. To maintain its essential role on the world stage, the Organization must respond to the changes, learning to live with imperfections while correcting anachronisms. Today, as never before, world public opinion, the opinion of the people in our countries of "we the peoples", is aware of what the United Nations does or fails to do of its achievements and its failures.

We welcome the fact that last May the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/215 B, whereby it decided to convene a special meeting of the General Assembly from 22 to 24 October 1995 at the level of Heads of State and Government.

The solemn meeting of our Heads of State and Government is an opportunity for the adoption of a declaration that, as we see it, should reflect on past achievements, while analysing the challenges of the present and addressing trends that point to the future.

The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization submitted to the General Assembly last September, pointed out that the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations presented a historic opportunity that must be seized. He stated that:

> "The fiftieth anniversary ... invites the United Nations, its Member States and the peoples of the world to appreciate and strengthen the accomplishments of the past, to recognize and meet the challenges of the present, and to design and implement a plan for the United Nations of the future." (*A/49/1, para. 12*)

We have, of course, fully supported the work done by the open-ended drafting group established by consensus to prepare the draft declaration, and we shall continue to do so, because we feel that the adoption of a substantive document, coinciding with the meeting of our Heads of State and Government, is the best way to ensure the success of, and to give significance to, the October 1995 summit.

Of course, we should have liked the drafting group to work more quickly during the year. None the less, we are optimistic since, as we see from the report to the General Assembly of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary, an intensive debate has already taken place. Much of what emerged in that exchange will surely be reflected in the declaration. However, we must not put too much trust in propitious inertia, nor err on the side of excessive caution in a text that must speak definitively for us all and therefore must adequately reflect the problems of us all, the serious issues that we necessarily share, for good or ill. Thus, it is indeed high time to take pen in hand and get down to drafting.

Mexico's national committee on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary is pursuing its work in my country, determined to disseminate knowledge of the purposes and principles and work of the United Nations. To raise the Mexican people's consciousness of the activities of the Organization and to ensure their support, we have agreed, among other things to be accomplished, on a programme of publications devoted to issues historically relevant to the United Nations, with particular reference to Mexico.

We are also promoting the production by public, private and university facilities of radio and television programmes devoted to the United Nations and have set in train an extensive programme to prepare translations, seminars and conferences devoted to the fiftieth anniversary.

At the level of our national committee, and as part of the programme for the issuance of special commemorative postage stamps in 1995, our Government will issue a postage stamp on the theme of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Our national committee is supporting other activities designed to enhance the significance of the fiftieth anniversary, to which my Government attaches particular importance. In the same spirit, we have contributed to the trust fund established by the Secretary-General to support activities devoted to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary.

Mexico looks forward enthusiastically to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. We are joining in the exercise of reflection on the issues that is involved in the drafting of the declaration to which we have referred and which will undoubtedly be one of the culminating events of the special meeting of the General Assembly in October 1995 in which our Heads of State and Government will participate. We reaffirm here that Mexico is fully prepared to continue working with the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Mr. Richard Butler, Permanent Representative of Australia, and with Under-Secretary-General Gillian Sorensen to ensure that the

commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary has the high profile and the substance it deserves.

Mr. Hormazabal (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: We are less than a year away from the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. For the Government of Chile, the commemoration of this anniversary is an act not only of justice but also of hope.

In the mid-1960s, Pope Paul VI, addressing the General Assembly, issued this emotional appeal:

> "Never again war, war never again! Never again one against another, or even one above another, but always, on every occasion, with each other."

His Holiness spoke in this very place, to the signatories of the international Magna Carta "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

In 1992, the Secretary-General of the United Nations included the following devastating fact in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace":

> "Since the creation of the United Nations in 1945, over 100 major conflicts around the world have left some 20 million dead." (*A/47/277, para. 14*)

Twenty million people represents one and a half times the population of Chile.

Notwithstanding the lessons history has taught us, we human beings, like latter-day Cains, go on spilling the blood of our brothers, bringing untold suffering to the world. It is our world, the only one we have and it belongs to us all; it is a world in which no one is superfluous and no one can escape responsibility for commissions or omissions.

Another Pope, John Paul II, speaking in 1979 before the General Assembly, reminded us that:

> "the spirit of war, in its basic primordial meaning, springs up and grows to maturity where the inalienable rights of man are violated." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Plenary Meetings, 17th meeting, para. 25)*

In 1992 the Secretary-General put it this way:

> "Poverty, disease, famine, oppression and despair abound, joining to produce 17 million refugees, 20 million displaced persons and massive migrations of peoples within and beyond national borders." (*A/47/277, para. 13*)

In the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, approved in 1990 by Chile among other countries, it is stated that:

> "Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem. (*A/45/625, annex, para. 6*)

Forty thousand children a day means 1.2 million a month, or more than 14 million a year. And that does not take into account the number of persons who today are being cut down by shrapnel, or the number that will be cut down tomorrow.

Even without war, we have witnessed the negative effects of nuclear radiation, water pollution and the depletion of the ozone layer, any of which can be more dangerous for people than a hostile army. In 1990 the former President of Chile, Patricio Aylwin, said here,

> "If we wish to remain faithful to the principles that presided over the founding of the Organization we must be consistent in pursuing the idea that world peace is closely linked to the reign of freedom, economic and social progress and rising standards of living for all the world's peoples." (*A/45/PV.12, p. 21*)

Today it is clearer than ever that world peace will not be properly safeguarded unless we face up promptly and appropriately to the root economic and social causes of many of the conflicts that mankind is now experiencing. It will be hard to build a lasting peace as long as violations of human rights, massive migration, lack of freedom, hunger, poverty and social marginalization persist.

It was precisely that certainty that prompted the Government of Chile to promote, within the United Nations, the holding of the World Summit for Social Development, which, by agreement of the General Assembly, will take place in Copenhagen next year. In the view of the Government of Chile, the World Summit for Social Development will offer a unique opportunity to inaugurate a new phase in the life of the United Nations

on the basis of the integrated approach to which I have referred.

By the same token, because we regard the United Nations as a very relevant body, we have resolutely supported strengthening and reforming it and have participated actively in the debate on the restructuring of some of its organs. We believe that concepts such as greater democratization, rationalization and transparency will give the activities of the United Nations even greater legitimacy.

Accordingly, Chile has made concrete proposals with respect to the expansion of the Security Council, of which my country hopes to be a member in 1996 and 1997. We believe that in that organ we will be able to make our contribution to the new spirit of cooperation that today characterizes international relations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations gives Chile particular joy. Hence, we have cooperated actively with the Preparatory Committee, of which we have the honour of being a Vice-Chairman. I take this opportunity to mention the excellent leadership provided by Ambassador Butler as Chairman of that Committee. I would also like to emphasize here the commendable work done by Mrs. Sorensen in her capacity as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General in this important commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary.

It is precisely in response to the initiatives that emerged from this forum that Chile has established a national committee for the fiftieth anniversary, which is designed to coordinate at the national level the various activities planned to draw attention to this important anniversary and to help our compatriots gain a fuller understanding of the importance of the United Nations for mankind as a whole. We wish our national committee to incorporate all sectors of the population, and it is therefore made up of representatives of our principal organizations, including the Senate of the Republic, which is the branch of State power that I have the honour of representing.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Chile's commitment to the activities of the United Nations and its determination to cooperate substantively in the various areas in which the Organization is active. In this way we hope to contribute to the construction of a more stable and just twenty-first century in which full participation is guaranteed.

Finally, let me say that if we adults do not fulfil our historical responsibilities, I pray to God that the youth of the world, our sons and daughters, will at least make it possible for the $2 million spent every minute, according to the Secretary-General, on military defence to be reallocated to the creation of a world of greater solidarity.

Mr. Graf zu Rantzau (Germany): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden.

We are approaching the golden anniversary of this Organization. Next year will be the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. In this context, we offer our special congratulations to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, who has so ably guided the Committee's work since its inception. Our thanks go also to all the members of the Bureau and to Under-Secretary-General Sorensen and the staff of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat.

Since its establishment in April 1992 the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations has been an active body which has managed to coordinate and promote world-wide activities for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. It has offered a forum for an exchange of information among United Nations Member States with regard to their national preparations for the event. By now about 80 countries, including all members of the European Union, as well as Finland, Norway and Sweden, have established national committees for the commemoration of this event. They are preparing countless activities on local, regional, national and international levels.

At the same time, the Preparatory Committee provided Member States with regular updates about the planning and coordinating activities of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat. We appreciate the preparations which are under way for numerous projects covering a wide range of activities in the arts, publications, politics and education. Activities which are directed towards the world's youth enjoy our particular support.

The European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden support the efforts made and welcome the Secretary-General's invitation for a special meeting of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session at the level of Heads of State or Government to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary. That meeting should celebrate the

fundamental role of the United Nations in pursuing the purposes ascribed to it by the drafters of the Charter 50 years ago.

The Preparatory Committee has also taken up the task of attempting to produce a special fiftieth anniversary declaration which will reflect common views of all United Nations Member States about the past, the present and, particularly, the future of our Organization. The declaration should be clear and concise. We hope that consensus on such a declaration can be reached.

The European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden wish to reiterate their support for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary on a national and an international level. The event should be commemorated by all peoples of the world, united for a better future. In this context, we feel that the central orientation of the celebrations ought to be towards the future, highlighting the role of the United Nations in tomorrow's world.

Let me say that we endorse the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee set out in section V of its report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The delegation of Ukraine would like to thank the Rapporteur, Mrs. Lucille Mathurin Mair, for her well prepared and skilfully presented report. In our view, the report provides a good basis for further work by the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

I should like, at the outset, to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Butler, and to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Public Policy, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, for their tireless efforts to ensure a proper celebration of the Organization's anniversary.

The most important date on the international calendar for 1995 will undoubtedly be that which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The United Nations was founded by countries that had borne the brunt of the harsh ordeals of the most brutal war in the history of mankind. We are proud of the fact that Ukraine took an active part in laying the foundations for the Organization and, together with other members of the international community, is today making its contribution to fulfilling the noble purposes of the United Nations.

Throughout these years the United Nations, in an effort to harmonize its activity with contemporary global developments, has continued to be an Organization that is truly universal. The unique nature of its structure and its dedication to the lofty purposes and principles of its Charter have promoted the creation of a new dimension in relations between countries and peoples and, to a significant extent, has consolidated the foundations for the building of a new world order. A driving force in this process has been the achieving of independence by many countries of the world, including Ukraine.

Ukraine, as one of the founding Members of the United Nations, has always taken a most active part in the activities of this unique international Organization, which it regards as the basis for the building of inter-State relations. Bearing in mind the enormous changes in international relations in recent years, Ukraine considers the United Nations to have been one of the reliable guarantors of the independence and territorial integrity of young independent States during the most difficult period of building and developing their own statehood.

We also believe that the United Nations can act as a major stimulus to economic reconstruction and, above all, serve as an inexhaustible source of experience in the fields of international contacts and of the authority of States. It is precisely from these perspectives that we view the forthcoming celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

A year and a half ago a national organizing committee to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations was established in Ukraine to promote the international community's initiative. That committee has done a great deal of work since then. By edict of the Government of Ukraine, a programme of projects to celebrate the anniversary has been prepared and ratified, in cooperation with the relevant Ministries and agencies of the country. The programme includes a wide range of projects, both scientific and cultural. It provides, *inter alia*, for the creation in Kiev of a memorial park, where trees will be planted by eminent political and public figures.

To finance these undertakings the Government of Ukraine, despite the country's very difficult economic situation, has allocated significant funds from the State budget. Unfortunately, an analysis of the work of our national committee during its first year indicates that the means provided are insufficient for realization of the fundamental elements of the programme that I have

mentioned. We are therefore now seeking financial support from various firms and private companies.

Work in this area is producing some results. Thus, for example, thanks to support from public organizations in Japan, we shall be able to host in Kiev next May an international conference on the subject of the United Nations and the future generation. A more detailed description of the objectives and conditions with regard to the financing of this undertaking will be submitted to the United Nations Secretariat at a later date, on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary.

We also hope to receive all possible assistance from the United Nations system, including the Secretariat, for our positive initiatives in respect of the celebration of the anniversary. Here, I refer to the provision of various types of data — video, audio, printed and consultative. In that context, we believe that it is worth proposing to all national committees that they submit to the Secretariat a short report on their work this year. Such a report, in addition to relating successes and achievements, could reflect the basic problems and difficulties that States are encountering in the course of their preparations for the national-level celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. The general conclusions of national committees' reports would be helpful in the preparation of basic recommendations. Thus the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the national committees in the year of celebration would be considerably enhanced. In our view, it is precisely analysis of the first steps in the activity of the Preparatory Committee that is missing from the report submitted today.

The delegation of Ukraine supports the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the Preparatory Committee to convene a special commemorative meeting, at the highest level, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter. In our view, such a meeting would provide an excellent opportunity to focus on and discuss problems pertaining to the development of mankind in the post-confrontation era, to analyse the current situation creatively and provide answers to the challenges of the present and to sketch out the prospects for development in the future.

We believe that it is important that Member and observer States should participate in this undertaking at the level of Head of State or Government. I should like to take this opportunity to report that the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, has gratefully accepted the invitation of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to participate in the work of the special commemorative meeting.

No less important is the adoption of a solemn declaration marking the anniversary of the United Nations. As we see it, this should reflect the realities of today's world order and the vision of the future and should reaffirm Member States' dedication to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the fundamental purposes of the Organization and its various bodies, which have stood the test of time.

Unfortunately, none of the versions of the text of the declaration before us is entirely satisfactory. We believe there are two reasons for this. First, the versions proposed do not take account of the interests of all groups of States; and secondly, they do not acknowledge the universally recognized principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, namely sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability of the borders of independent States, the equality of sovereign States or the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Not until we can balance these approaches with the conceptual principles stated in paragraph 11 of the Preparatory Committee's report (A/49/48) can we expect to conclude successfully our work on the declaration, on the basis of full consensus.

It is important — and I wish to draw particular attention to this point — that the declaration should highlight the major areas of United Nations activity and the guiding principles of its work in the future.

The text of the declaration should also include a section entitled "Partnership for development". An end to suspicion, mistrust and mutual counter-claims, in the interests of stable economic development, a display of solidarity in order to strengthen international justice and equality, a proclamation of the importance of establishing true partnership relations, on the basis of equality, in economic and related fields — these are all essential elements of the conceptual approach which must provide the basis for this proposal.

Now, as never before, we have every reason to see the United Nations as a powerful instrument, capable of maintaining international peace and security, strengthening justice and human rights, and promoting "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must also serve as an invitation to formulate and implement a plan to transform the United Nations into an organization of the future. In addition,

that year, as is noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, represents

> "an exhilarating challenge and an invaluable opportunity to forge a global consensus behind development, in all of its dimensions, as the most lasting foundation for international peace and security and as the greatest hope for all humanity". *(A/49/1, para. 12)*

The delegation of Ukraine supports such an approach and is ready actively to participate.

Mr. Shambos (Cyprus): The forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations comes at a time when mankind is at a crucial juncture of history. On the one hand, there is a feeling of hope brought about by the end of the cold war, and on the other hand there is deep unrest, as a result of the numerous conflicts and the strife that are causing bloodshed and suffering.

The United Nations anniversary, next year, will offer an opportunity for in-depth analysis of half a century's work and, even more challenging, an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Since it was founded half a century ago, the United Nations has sought to build an international community based on peace, international security and the rule of law. In this quest, the United Nations has, admittedly, an uneven record. We have world peace, even though local conflicts and civil wars; we have made great strides with regard to decolonization and in the struggle against apartheid; we have made meaningful progress in dealing with the environment, population growth and social development. On the other hand, the spectre of genocide has not disappeared; poverty and destitution remain ingrained as much in the South as in the North; fundamental human rights are still violated; and, most importantly, aggression and occupation have not been eradicated. We know, bitterly, better than others in this respect.

Regrettably, at this stage, world order and a world free from force and the scourge of war have not yet been realized.

Today, more than ever before, we have the chance to help the Organization to meet its goals by implementing the provisions of the Charter regarding collective international security, by carrying out organizational reforms and by giving the United Nations adequate manpower and finances to carry out its mission.

The principles and ideals laid down by the founding fathers almost 50 years ago are universal and can, if we rededicate ourselves to them, guide us for the next half century and beyond towards the peace and justice to which we all aspire. We live in an ever-changing world where the need for corresponding changes in our Organization is not only necessary but also a matter of survival. We must strive to understand the nature of the new global political economic and social environment which is fundamentally different from that of 1945. We must be determined to meet the new challenges to our Organization by building on the everlasting principles and values of the existing Charter.

The report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations contains a wealth of commemorative programmes and activities, which are evidence of the most constructive preparatory work being done by its members, under the wise guidance of the Committee's Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Richard Butler. We fully support the proposal for global "teach-ins" about the United Nations, the issuing of commemorative coins, television programmes, symposia, exhibits and so on.

We believe that the Committee is on the right path in endeavouring to create awareness in all strata of society, by rejuvenating the interest of ordinary people and by spotlighting the purposes and principles of the Charter as beacons of hope for a better, peaceful and just world. We all must re-emphasize the need for the observance of these principles and our commitment to respect them without reservation or selectivity, both in the spirit and the letter. Only thus can our Organization meet its promised limits and goals.

As Cyprus is a country whose foreign policy evolves around the United Nations, and whose stands are guided by the principles enshrined in the Charter, we have already established our national committee on the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The Committee is preparing a number of programmes, with special emphasis on enhancing an awareness of the important role of the United Nations among all age strata of our society. We specifically plan educational campaigns on the United Nations, special television programmes and newspaper articles, school lectures and film shows and the creation of

commemorative items, such as stamps, to mark the anniversary.

Cyprus wishes to pay special tribute to the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, representative of the Secretary-General for this historic event. Cyprus has had occasion to cooperate with Mrs. Sorensen on issues affecting the diplomatic community and the city of New York. We know her dedication, her unparalleled qualifications and, above all, her human ways of doing things. We wish her success and pledge, of course, our fullest cooperation.

Mr. Chong-Ha Yoo (Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Republic of Korea would like to express its satisfaction with the overall progress made so far in preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995. In particular, we wish to note that the Preparatory Committee, under the dedicated and most professional leadership of its Chairman, Ambassador Butler of Australia, has produced a draft resolution regarding the special commemorative meeting, which will be the highlight of the anniversary events. The Government of the Republic of Korea attaches great importance to this meeting and urges all Member States to lend their full support to make it a truly successful and momentous occasion.

We would also like to acknowledge the excellent job done by the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Sorensen, and her staff in the secretariat in guiding efforts to develop various programmes and projects to observe the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and to convey the ideals and achievements of the Organization to peoples across the globe. My delegation believes that these initiatives will help national committees to formulate their own programmes.

My delegation shares the view that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should be not only a festive occasion, but also an opportunity to reaffirm the principles of its Charter and set useful guidelines for its future work. In this regard, we believe that during the anniversary the international community should seek various means, in accordance with the Charter principles, the better to meet the challenges ahead. Since its inception in 1945 the United Nations has carried out its multidimensional tasks as peace-keeper, peacemaker, promoter of human rights, development and international justice and protector of the environment. Throughout its half-century history the world body has experienced both successes and failures. At this juncture the international community should utilize the various lessons of the Organization's past experience as guidelines for the next 50 years and beyond.

The Republic of Korea owes a great deal to the United Nations. The inauguration of our Government in 1948 was done under the auspices of the United Nations, and it was this Organization which played a major role in ending the war in the Korean Peninsula in the early 1950s. Accordingly, the contributions of the United Nations to Korea remain deeply rooted in the memory of the Korean people.

In the light of our historical relationship with the United Nations, the National Committee of the Republic of Korea for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations was established last April and is now preparing a variety of programmes and celebratory events, placing special emphasis on enhancing awareness of the role of the United Nations among the younger generations of Korea.

We will also actively participate in the programmes sponsored by the United Nations. In this regard I am pleased to note that a leading Korean corporation, Goldstar, has recently signed a contract with the United Nations to act as a global sponsor of preparations for the United Nations fiftieth anniversary.

Finally, my delegation wishes to make a brief comment on the future work of the Preparatory Committee. Notwithstanding our general satisfaction with the Committee's work, my delegation is concerned at the slow progress of its drafting group in drawing up a declaration for adoption on 24 October 1995. My delegation sincerely hopes that the drafting group will reach consensus on a draft as early as possible in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

Mr. Manz (Austria): Let me first of all pay tribute to the way in which the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, has managed to guide the Committee through the not always easy process of finding consensus on ways and means of celebrating this landmark event. I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Sorensen and her able staff of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat for their untiring efforts to promote our Organization and its ideals throughout 1995.

Austria fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Germany

on behalf of the European Union. The year 1995 will mark the fortieth year of Austrian membership of the United Nations. As one of the host countries of the Organization, we feel a special responsibility for its development. I should therefore like to add a few observations of a more general nature.

This anniversary is no time for complacency or self-congratulation. We must realize that very few people outside this building are interested in the finer procedural points which so often are our first and last line of defence. Despite many achievements, a good part of the tremendous potential of the United Nations is squandered. All too often special interests stand in the way of progress in the direction of the goals to which we have all subscribed in the Charter.

The end of the cold war, which for so many years almost paralysed the work of the Organization, has presented us with a unique opportunity to turn the United Nations into the instrument that it was originally intended to be. Of course, nobody would expect such a profound change to be taken in stride, but at this critical juncture we must not allow a confrontational situation similar to those in the past to develop, albeit along different dividing lines. Let us turn 1995 into the year when we forge a durable consensus to take on the important challenges facing us all.

We should build upon the positive tendencies and ideas that have evolved in the recent past. In this context the Agenda for Peace and the soon-to-be published Agenda for Development constitute important starting points. They will certainly provoke lively debates for quite some time. But already they have made one point abundantly clear: all the main problems to be addressed by the Organization and the peoples of the world are very closely interlinked. We will have to address all of them at the same time.

Austria has therefore placed two seminars at the centre of its national celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary. In March 1995 the Austrian Government, together with the International Peace Academy, will organize a seminar on peacemaking and peace-keeping for the next century. The Secretary-General has kindly agreed to present a keynote address introducing the theme of the seminar. In August the traditional international seminar for junior diplomats in Salzburg will be dedicated to a discussion of the Agenda for Development and the reform of the United Nations.

To conclude on a lighter note, I should like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly of the Austrian Government's plans completely to refurbish the Viennese Café downstairs on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary. This should have a long-lasting positive effect on our work in this building.

Mr. Melendez-Barahona (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am pleased to deliver this statement on agenda item 44, "Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations", on behalf of the following Central American countries: Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador.

The Central American countries express their appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for the progress it has made in the preparations for commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and their gratitude for its report, which contains a series of recommendations for commemorating a historic milestone in current international relations.

We are pleased with the set of projects being implemented and the projects being prepared to commemorate a special date in the life of our world Organization. The national committees established in our respective countries have been informed of these projects, so that they may take them into account in developing programmes at the national level. We also welcome the plan to convene a special commemorative meeting at the level of Heads of State or Government and to have the General Assembly adopt on 24 October 1995 a solemn declaration in which Member States would reaffirm their support for the principles of the Charter, which embody the international community's yearnings and aspirations for the Organization's future work.

We believe, however, that these events must go beyond commemorations and declarations of principles. This date affords us an opportunity for reflection, heightened awareness and a constructive analysis of our Organization's past, present and future.

The very idea of the United Nations was born and consolidated in the crucible of a war against a common enemy. Just like its predecessor, the late League of Nations, it was created to avoid another world war, which, given the emergence of nuclear weapons, would have even more devastating consequences. The United Nations was established, in the words of the Charter, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". It was created to avoid war and to seek peace through political means and negotiation based on a multilateral

system and an institutional structure centred in the United Nations.

The collective maintenance of international peace and security, the fostering of friendly relations, the improvement of the living conditions of peoples everywhere and the harmonization of the efforts of the United Nations to attain our common goals — these are the original purposes and principles which the Organization should have put fully into effect in order to build a better and safer world for humanity. However, our efforts to that end have been impeded by contradictions which have been reflected within the Organization itself because of its intergovernmental nature and which have led to political differences and conflicts of interest, but also and particularly by the political deadlock and the Organization's inertia resulting from the East-West confrontation, during which problems — some of which remain unsolved — accumulated.

In this respect, the achievements of the United Nations through much of its history have been politically and socially limited, while the picture has been far more positive in the field of cooperation and assistance for development. This situation is a reflection of the inequality and prevailing power structure of international relations, which have often been used to advance parochial interests, disregarding and thus distorting the Organization's universality.

During the cold war, insecurity was a dominant factor and international economic disparities, instead of being narrowed, were actually broadened. With the end of the cold war, however, new hopes, expectations and opportunities were born for fulfilling the aspirations of peoples, in consonance with the spirit of the founders of the United Nations.

At present, given the improvement in international relations resulting from the disappearance of ideological barriers, distrust and hostility, we have entered a phase of transition towards what we assume will be a new and more just and equitable international order. The new arrangement of forces worldwide has modified the perceptions within the Organization, and this has provided the impetus for restructuring and revitalizing it and making it more efficient, particularly since most Members are convinced of the need for change, democratization and a redirection of the role of the United Nations in world affairs. But this institutional change must not further enhance the capacity of the developed countries, rich and powerful as they are, to influence the decisions of the Organization to the detriment of the participation of the small States. Only in that way can we prevent the Organization from reflecting the unjust international order based on a concert of powerful nations running world affairs.

We all know that the maintenance of international peace and security remains a fundamental objective of the Organization. But it is also facing old and new challenges in a world characterized by major international inequalities — a situation that cries out for change, in terms not only of structures but also of procedures and decision-making, in order to attune and adapt the Organization to the interests and needs of all the nations of the world.

We cannot delight in the increased participation of the United Nations in localized conflicts, although this is certainly one of its functions. Rather, this should cause us concern, because the Organization's purposes and objectives are not being achieved and doubts are arising about whether it can effectively prevent and resolve conflicts. While in the past this was reflected in a sectoral approach to global problems, now it is felt that the Organization must respond to global problems and challenges, where social and environmental factors have become relevant within a broad concept of full and sustainable development.

In the process of renewing the United Nations, Member States have often expressed their continued belief in its basic principles, which must be faithfully respected if democracy is to exist within the Organization. This applies in particular to the principles of equality, universality, responsibility, impartiality and respect for diversity and transparency. The effective implementation of these principles would overcome much of the criticism concerning the use of the Organization's machinery for specific ends.

Under the new international order, there have not been fewer conflicts but, on the contrary, many more, because of long-standing factors in the economic, political and social structures of States, inequalities in international relations, and new political, ethnic, religious, territorial and national-identity issues. This new order has not been applicable to developing countries; indeed, instead of improving their economic and social conditions, it has exacerbated them. All this cries out for a fresh start.

Of course, the situation in 1945 in no way resembled the present one. But it is also obvious that contradictions, conflicts of interest, internal conflicts, international disputes and development problems persist, and that the only universal system available for addressing the requirements of States and the hopes and aspirations of their peoples is still the United Nations.

The purposes and principles of the Organization continue to be valid, but we believe that to attain them substantive changes in the Organization must be introduced. We believe, also, that reform is a serious and complex task that must be based on a comprehensive approach. The United Nations must be an organization which is designed to serve all the nations of the world and which permits the greatest participation possible in decision-making, as opposed to the current situation, in which it is the privilege of a few to impose their priorities and opinions on world events.

We understand and are aware of the factors that impede the building of an organization that can fully meet the interests of all its members and effectively guide international affairs. But if we wish this system to endure we must strive and work tirelessly to ensure a balance in the implementation of the purposes and principles of the Organization.

It is timely to recall that in 1992 we held a summit meeting of the Security Council. At that historic gathering the leaders of the States Members of that organ, in particular the major Powers as permanent members with the right of veto, made statements affirming their commitment and political will to support the work of the Organization in the sense of attuning it to the new conditions, requirements and challenges faced by the international community, including the imperative of democratizing it and of allowing for the participation of all Member States in decision-making, with a view to obtaining the greatest degree of consensus possible, making it more transparent and capable of equitable and non-discriminatory action — statements which were subsequently reflected in the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace". These declarations of intent, however, have not become a reality to the extent the majority of the international community would have liked, but we feel that the forthcoming summit meeting of the Security Council — to be held at the beginning of next year — should afford an opportunity to reaffirm the political determination to make the necessary changes to attain the original purposes of the United Nations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provides us an opportunity as States Members to make a fresh commitment to galvanize the process of renewal by refocusing our efforts based upon an analysis of the evolution of the Organization's work. We must also work in concert and make joint efforts to make sure that the United Nations is updated and attuned to meet global challenges.

Finally, democratizing, changing and reorienting the United Nations involves a political decision that must be based on the full conviction of States Members of the need to reverse current trends within the Organization by a complete, transparent and consistent process.

The United Nations has been what Governments have wanted it to be, particularly those with the greatest capability and resources to influence the major decisions taken by the Organization, and they are also those which, in the final analysis, will make possible the renewal of the Organization. This will hinge on the extent to which they are prepared to recognize the interests and problems faced by the international community as a whole, and on the extent to which they are prepared to initiate the process of setting up a truly new international order that would take into account the interests of developing countries, one that would be different from the status quo that has prevailed in international relations ever since the end of the Second World War.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My very first words from this rostrum are meant to hail as President, Ambassador Amara Essy, an illustrious son of Côte d'Ivoire, and someone who truly reflects the superb calibre of men and women in Africa dedicated to the service of great causes. I also wish to hail those eminent personalities who, acting in the capacity of Vice-Presidents, are working in concert with him in the Bureau.

As to the item on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations I should like to add Panama's voice to all those who have already paid tribute to the work done thus far by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. My delegation has noted the dynamism that Mrs. Gillian Sorensen and her team have shown. We also wish to pay tribute to the outstanding job done by the Preparatory Committee, under the leadership of Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, which, along with the impetus provided by the secretariat for the fiftieth anniversary, allows us even now to see an outline

of the success that will be made of this global commemoration.

As a representative of a democratic Government that took power in Panama just two months ago, this opportunity is indeed propitious for me to declare that my country has decided to take part fully in activities to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary.

The Preparatory Committee has the mandate to prepare a draft declaration, and to that end it has set up an open-ended drafting group, to which Panama is committed to contribute.

Panama is a small country and historically it has been to the forefront in efforts to achieve unity and integration throughout Latin America; a country which indeed reflects the spirit of Simon Bolivar, and one whose international relations have a universalist tradition, symbolized by the open channel that runs through the heart of its territory, providing a link between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. It is our view that the text of the declaration to be adopted must reflect a shared sense that we all indeed endorse and must be formulated in terms that will be understood by the common people. The declaration must be capable of inspiring not only men and women of all ages but, in particular, children and young people with a sense of profound understanding of the significance of this fiftieth anniversary.

We hope and expect to see that the commemorative events and the declaration itself will point towards a noble future for mankind, in particular, in so far as peace, equality, justice and development are concerned. It will be possible to attain this goal only if we ensure the participation of our national committees, non-governmental organizations and the entire United Nations system and its staff, and if we enjoy the backing of people everywhere around the globe who are yearning to see the ideals of the San Francisco Charter for a more democratic, just and humane international order become a reality.

The President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Australia, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. Butler (Australia), Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations: Because of the lateness of the hour and the length of this fascinating debate I shall be very brief. I have sought to speak as Chairman of the Committee at the end of this debate as I think it is fitting to say a few words of thanks and to make one brief comment.

I thank our Rapporteur for the outstanding job that she did to assist in the preparation of the report before the Assembly and for introducing it so comprehensively today. I am also very grateful to Member States for the constant attention they have given to the work of the Committee throughout the past year. The quality of that work is reflected in many ways, not just in the text of the report but in the concrete programmes that are emerging both within Member States and internationally for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. Members of the Bureau and I have always felt very strongly supported by Member States with a real determination to ensure that next year will be what we all want it to be and what history requires it to be.

Of course, I must give deep and especially grateful mention to Under-Secretary-General Sorensen for the extraordinary work she has performed during the last year, which I know we can all expect to continue with even greater dynamism and results as we move closer to the fiftieth anniversary, and our thanks go to the very small but very effective staff that has been provided to help her in the task.

I want to thank too those who have spoken in today's debate. I think it has been clear today that there is a deep sense in the house of the importance of what we are preparing and of how much we see it as not just a reflection on the past, of having arrived at the great age of half a century, but as something far more than that, an opportunity for us to chart the future that we all so deeply want for this Organization and for all of us as representatives of the people who sent us here.

We are of course beginning the final phase of our activity. We have tasks of commemoration, of education and of celebration to bring to conclusion, so that a few months from now they will reach out to the world, especially to the young people, bringing the message of the successful conclusion of this Organization's half-century of life, often under difficult conditions, and, more importantly, the vision of the future life of this Organization reoriented to the welfare of people throughout the world.

In that context, the other great task we have to complete in the next few months is that of drafting the declaration of 1995. It is of course my hope — and I know it is a hope shared by all — that that declaration

will be a beacon of light to all of the people who look to this United Nations for so much, a beacon of light shining on a new path for the United Nations in the years ahead.

As Chairman, I thank all members. I commend to them the two draft resolutions contained in the report. I look forward to working further with all members in the months ahead as we bring this great work of the fiftieth anniversary to a conclusion.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 43/177 of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Please let me begin by expressing our deep appreciation of the efforts of the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler, in steering the work of the Committee and our thanks to Ambassador Lucille Mair, the Committee's Rapporteur. Also allow me to extend appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, and to the team that assists her for their valuable efforts aimed at making a success of the activities of the Preparatory Committee and at providing the appropriate conditions, both within and outside the United Nations system, for a successful celebration that would reflect the importance of the event.

The United Nations, which has undergone many changes both in form and in substance, is now the international Organization on which the States and peoples pin their hopes for preserving peace and security, for avoiding wars and disasters, for ensuring a prosperous economic life for us all rather than for just a few, and for establishing a world order based on respect for law and democracy.

As far as we Palestinians are concerned, the United Nations, over and above all this, symbolizes also the Palestinian cause. In terms of time, the United Nations has been concerned with the Palestinian cause since the Organization's inception and in terms of substance, it was the United Nations that put an end to the mandate on Palestine and divided it into two States. Thus, it is very difficult to draw a line between the United Nations and the Palestinian cause. Hence the abiding responsibility of the United Nations towards the Palestinian cause, at the legal, moral and political levels, until such time as that cause is really resolved and until such time as comprehensive and permanent peace is achieved in the Middle East.

The Israeli Ambassador has referred before this Committee to two very important resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the first years of the United Nations. We agree with him regarding the importance of the two resolutions, but disagree with regard to their meaning. The first is resolution 181 (1947), which divided Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab State. The Jewish State was established on the *de jure* basis of this division, while the Arab State has not been established yet. It is therefore the duty of the international community as a whole to continue to work for the establishment of that State in order for a just and durable peace to be achieved in the Middle East. The second is resolution 273 (1949) whereby Israel was accepted as a State Member of the United Nations in 1949. It must be recalled here that both the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted the positive resolution relating to that membership in the light of Israeli legal commitments to implement the resolutions of the United Nations, in particular resolution 194 (1948), which stipulates, *inter alia*, the return of the Palestinian refugees to their lands or their compensation. This has not taken place so far. Again it is the duty of the international community as a whole to continue to work in order to restore to the Palestinian refugees their rights.

It is not correct to speak of previous resolutions of the United Nations as though the whole world was wrong and only one State was right. Also, it is not useful to our joint action in the future. The world has changed, and the situation in the Middle East has changed. Fortunately, the Israeli stance too has changed, side by side with the change in the Palestinian stance. All this has combined to bring about the positive changes in the resolutions of the United Nations. We have worked in the past and shall work in the future to see to it that the resolutions of the United Nations are in harmony with the reality, especially with the positive changes that have taken place and continue to take place. In so doing, we have to be realistic enough to realize that the road to comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East is a long one still. We must also keep in sight and abide by the principles enshrined in international law, in humanitarian international law and in the Charter of the United Nations. The fact that the peace process has started should not mean that this is the end of our work; it should rather mean that this is the beginning of the work as it should be carried out.

Palestine attaches particular importance to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

In view of the importance we attach to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we attach particular importance to the application of the measures adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 to Palestine as an Observer. We thank the Member States for deciding this question in the manner set forth in the report of the Preparatory Committee and look forward to its strict implementation.

We wish to thank in particular the Member States of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Movement and its President, Indonesia, and pay tribute to the positive stance taken by the host country, the United States of America, which made it possible to reach the consensus needed for the adoption of the appropriate measure.

We shall do our part in performing the serious work that lies ahead in preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and will ensure full participation by all our people in those preparations and we shall also do our part in ensuring justice for our people and building peace for the peoples of the Middle East, real peace, at a far remove from war and confrontation, peace that would be built on coexistence, tolerance and prosperity. It is our hope that this will prevail throughout the entire world. We pray to God that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should move us forward towards this objective.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We shall now proceed to consider the two draft resolutions contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director of General Assembly and Trusteeship Council Affairs Division): Under the terms of draft resolution II, contained in document A/49/48, the General Assembly would, *inter alia*, decide that the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary should continue its work and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, and/or during the forty-ninth session, as required.

It is anticipated that the Preparatory Committee would need to hold 24 meetings during 1995 and these would have to be added to the calendar of conferences and meetings. It is assumed that the 1995 meetings would require interpretation and translation services in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences for 1994 and 1995. However, provisions are made under section 25 of the proposed programme budget for 1994 to 1995 not only for meetings programmed at the time of budget preparation but also for meetings that would be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings in past years.

Consequently, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution II, no additional appropriation would be required under section 25 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994 to 1995.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution I, entitled "Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution I?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 49/11).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution II, entitled "Work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", also contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution II?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 49/12).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 44.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.56

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

56th Meeting
Monday, 14 November 1994, 10.20 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Coté d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 149

Report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991: note by the Secretary-General transmitting the first annual report of the International Tribunal (A/49/342)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly has before it the first report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. This report covers the period from 17 November 1993 to 28 July 1994 and is contained in document A/49/342.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the first report of the International Tribunal?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Antonio Cassese, President of the International Tribunal.

Mr. Cassese (President, International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991): I am most grateful for the signal honour of being invited to address the General Assembly.

Of course, I shall not summarize the first annual report of the international criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. I shall simply draw the Assembly's attention to some crucial issues concerning the establishment and functioning of the Tribunal.

I shall divide my exposition into four parts. First, I shall briefly recall the unique nature of the Tribunal. Secondly, I shall try to cast light on some of the many problems that have so far beset the existence of the Tribunal. Thirdly, I shall provide an update to our annual report. Fourthly, I shall set out a few final reflections.

Just a few words will suffice to bring to the fore the novelty and crucial significance of the Tribunal. It cannot be denied that we are currently witnessing an escalation in both national and international violence. This escalation is not only quantitative but also qualitative, in a sinister way. In previous times, when individuals and State agents perpetrated vicious crimes, they hastened to cover them up, or else they denied being involved in their commission. These expedients, however hypocritical, showed, nevertheless, that individuals and States were endeavouring to cleanse their consciences by claiming that they had not, in fact, misbehaved. In recent years even this pretence of good behaviour has been

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dropped: individuals and State agents engage in barbarous misdeeds without fear of the moral and political blame of the world community. They slaughter, maim and kill without even attempting to conceal their murderous hand.

The quality of violence has also changed in a second respect. Conflict, animosity and ethnic, racial and social tension tend to be dramatically radicalized and to find their sole outlet in physical violence. We are also witnessing an evil implementation of the concept that the political universe falls into two categories: friend or enemy. "Either you are on my side, and I shall lend you a supportive hand, or you are my foe, and I shall give you no quarter." In this Manichean vision of life and society, little or no space is left for mutual understanding, for compromise, for the amicable settlement of differences.

Faced with this calamitous plunge into violence, the international community's response, at least with regard to two areas of conflict — first the former Yugoslavia and now Rwanda — has been drastic: those suspected of outrages against humanity must be brought to justice at the international level; if found guilty, they must be sternly punished by a truly international and truly impartial body, before the very eyes of the whole international community. It is apparent that the creation of these two institutions, so strongly willed by the international community, signals an impressive turning-point. The United Nations has not only built up a powerful bridgehead in its fight against inhumanity, but has also reinforced that position at the first possible opportunity. These important steps make it possible to cherish the hope that the United Nations will eventually establish a criminal court of a permanent nature for the punishment of outrages against humanity, wherever they may be perpetrated.

Let me move on to my second point, which can be set out as follows: How is it that 12 months after the establishment of this ground-breaking institution, the Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, no trials have yet been conducted at The Hague? To answer this question I need to draw the Assembly's attention to something which may seem obvious, and is indeed obvious, but which ought nevertheless to be borne in mind. To make an international criminal tribunal function one needs several things. One needs a courtroom and a secure place to hold the accused pending trial. One also needs international prosecutors and judges as well as law clerks, experts in court management, court reporters and other appropriate staff. In addition, one needs security officers responsible for the protection of judges and prosecutors as well as of victims, witnesses and defendants. On top of that, one needs guards charged with the custody of persons awaiting trial. It is clear that, even at this simple level, the logistical requirements of an international criminal court are numerous and varied, and markedly different from those necessary for setting up any of the various administrative bodies of the United Nations.

To depict graphically the way the international criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has tackled this huge array of problems, let me draw a parallel with the most important precedent at hand: the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.

At Nuremberg the bulk of the logistic resources was provided by the armies of the four victor Powers — in particular, by the United States Army. Whenever investigators, court reporters and other personnel were needed, the Nuremberg Tribunal tapped the huge resources of one of the occupying armies, and the problems were settled with military dispatch and efficiency. For example, it was from General Eisenhower that the Tribunal obtained its "Registrar", as well as approval for the payment of compensation to defence counsel. This made it possible for the trial to start with surprising speed — only three and a half months after the adoption of the Nuremberg Statute.

Things have gone differently with our Tribunal. Our Tribunal is a truly international institution. It is the expression of the entire world community, and not the long arm of four powerful victors. As a consequence, our Tribunal could only draw upon the resources made available to it by this world Organization, as well as voluntary contributions by States.

I shall not recount all the logistic, financial and other practical problems bedeviling the initial life of the Tribunal. These problems are set out in full in our annual report. Let me simply draw attention to three.

First, for many months after the institution of the Tribunal, the lack of a regular budget made it impossible to build a courtroom. As a consequence, a courtroom is only now available — 12 months after the setting up of the Tribunal. The same applies to the construction of a special detention unit under United Nations authority and control at The Hague. Despite the best efforts of all involved, this unit was ready only 11 months after the institution of the Tribunal.

Even more serious problems were caused by the lack of a Prosecutor. For many months this was a matter

of serious disquiet, for, under our Statute, no criminal proceedings can be started unless the Prosecutor submits an indictment. A Prosecutor was appointed by the Security Council in October 1993, but did not take office. Only in July 1994 — eight months after the Tribunal's establishment — was it possible for the Security Council to reach agreement on the appointment of another Prosecutor. Our Prosecutor, Justice Richard Goldstone, took office on 15 August this year — that is, eight and a half months after the initiation of the Tribunal's work.

In addition to these two major problems, let me draw attention to a third and fundamental difficulty that our Tribunal has had to face. This difficulty is not caused by financial or logistic strictures, but is inherent in the conduct of international criminal proceedings. To describe this difficulty, it may be useful briefly to compare our criminal proceedings with what normally happens in a national criminal case, on the one hand, and with the way in which international bodies normally collect information about serious breaches of international law, on the other. I shall start with a comparison with domestic criminal investigations.

Let us take a case of murder, the crime closest to those over which our International Tribunal has jurisdiction. Within a national setting, when a murder is committed, normally there is one victim and one offender. The police are able to commence their investigations immediately. As a rule, witnesses are not far from the location of the crime, and real evidence, such as weapons, blood and so on, can be readily collected. Furthermore, the police are guided by a set of clear legal rules and well-thumbed legal precedents.

Let me stress two more points, which are also important. On average, five to 10 investigators are called in to take part in the inquiry, which, again on average, may last many months. In addition, as soon as a suspect is identified, he or she is arrested by the police, who can then carry on their investigations and collection of evidence without fear that the presumed offender will escape. This is what happens in most States at the national level.

Let us now turn to the international setting — in particular, the setting of our Tribunal at The Hague. Here things are quite different. First of all, the crime scene is normally far from the seat of the investigators, as well as being inaccessible or, at any rate, not immediately accessible. Secondly, the crimes normally involve dozens of victims and scores of perpetrators. Thirdly, there is little or no forensic evidence available when the investigators arrive. Fourthly, often many States are involved in the investigations; the victims may have fled to various countries, while the witnesses may have taken refuge in others. Since each State has its own laws and its own bureaucracy, our Prosecutor needs to get in touch with and obtain cooperation from many different States. Fifthly — and most importantly — our Prosecutor has no immediate power of arrest, search or seizure. For this purpose he must turn to national authorities. However, before requesting the arrest, search or seizure, he must prove that there is a prima facie case — namely, that there is sufficient evidence leading to the reasonable belief that the suspect can be accused of the crime. It follows that our Prosecutor cannot first arrange for the arrest of the suspect and then collect the necessary evidence. No; he must first collect compelling evidence, and only at the end of this long process can he ask the national authorities to apprehend the suspect.

All these difficulties inherent in international criminal investigations are compounded by one striking fact: currently our Tribunal has approximately 20 investigators for all the crimes over which it has jurisdiction. In other words, it can count on the number of investigators normally used at the national level for just two or three murders. This, I believe, speaks volumes about the tremendous problems with which we are confronted.

Let me now move quickly to a comparison of the criminal investigation and prosecution processes of our Tribunal with the way in which other international bodies collect information about egregious violations of international legal standards. This comparison is also necessary because many commentators have been wondering why, given the wealth of existing documentation on alleged crimes in the former Yugoslavia — press reports and reports of Governments and non-governmental organizations, as well as the impressive work accomplished by the Commission of Experts created by the Security Council — the Prosecutor did not issue indictments immediately after taking office.

The problem is that those reports are a far cry from evidentiary material capable of standing up to judicial scrutiny. The task of our Prosecutor is to produce credible evidence to prove incredible events. This is a task which is fundamentally different from that of other bodies which are simply called upon to collect information.

Let me give an example. Let us assume that the representative of a non-governmental organization finds that there are 50 bodies in the mortuary of a village inhabited by a certain ethnic group. He notes that all of them have been killed by shelling. In addition, he is told by an inhabitant of the same village that on the previous day a military group belonging to an enemy army, located in the vicinity, attacked the village. In this case, that representative may be warranted in concluding that a massacre of civilians was perpetrated by that particular army.

Our Prosecutor needs to undertake much more extensive and complex investigations. He needs to prove that the death of those people was indeed caused by the shelling and not by any other explosion or firing. He needs to ascertain whether or not all those in the mortuary were killed by the same shelling; whether before dying they were themselves fighters or, instead, peaceful civilians; and whether any military installation was located close to the place where they were killed. Furthermore, our Prosecutor needs to identify those who carried out the shelling, the chain of command, whether or not orders were given to fire on the village and so on. The Prosecutor also has the onus of establishing the guilt of the suspects beyond any reasonable doubt. As can be seen, the task of our Prosecutor is more demanding than, and indeed different from, that of bodies and organizations responsible solely for collecting information and preparing reports.

I am aware that this is indeed a gloomy picture. Let me, however, emphasize one important point: the difficulties to which I have drawn attention should in no way lead one to conclude that the conduct of international criminal proceedings raises problems of such magnitude as to discourage resort to international criminal tribunals. Not at all! The practical and legal problems standing in the way of the good and speedy functioning of such tribunals are undoubtedly outweighed by the great merits of international criminal justice.

Indeed, in cases of gross and large-scale violations of international legal standards on human rights, particularly when such violations occur in time of armed conflict, international justice can guarantee absolute independence and objectivity as well as the correct application of those international legal standards. Often the national courts of the State or States where the gross breaches have occurred may not be in a position to render impartial justice, free from emotional or political overtones, and the courts of other States may lack the necessary jurisdiction. International justice thus becomes indispensable, the more so because the crimes at issue are so abhorrent and on such a scale as to concern the whole international community. True, the realization of international justice faces many practical problems. The response to these problems must be patience, perseverance and a strong will to overcome all existing and future difficulties.

That this must be the response is borne out by what has happened to our Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. In spite of the numerous and diverse handicaps to which I have referred, the Tribunal's action has only been slowed, not hamstrung. It was an uphill struggle, but we won the fight. Without waiting until all the necessary financial and practical measures had been taken in New York, the Tribunal's judges resolutely put in hand all those activities that were within their power. They have thus laid the groundwork for the initiation of criminal proceedings. Suffice it to mention, in this respect, the expeditious elaboration and adoption of a mini-code of international criminal procedure — our rules of procedure and evidence; of the rules of detention, governing the holding of accused in the Tribunal's custody while awaiting trial; and of the directive on the granting of legal aid to defendants. These three sets of legal rules are indeed unprecedented in the international community. Given the huge differences between our Tribunal and those of Nuremberg and Tokyo, we had to sail into uncharted waters.

These three sets of legal rules will now make it possible for trials to commence, as soon as the necessary legal and practical conditions are fulfilled.

One of the most important of these conditions — if not the major condition — is the filing of indictments by the Prosecutor. This is a crucial issue on which I wish to report to the General Assembly — and this will be my third point: namely, the updating of our first annual report.

At present, in spite of all the existing difficulties, the Prosecutor's Office is investigating 12 cases involving multiple suspects. Many of these investigations may require interviewing more than a hundred victims or witnesses, of whom possibly 60 will be called to each trial.

The investigations by the Prosecutor's Office have already yielded important results. In October the Prosecutor lodged with the Registrar an application for the deferral to our Tribunal of an important case then pending before the German authorities, a case involving

charges of genocide, "ethnic cleansing", torture and rape. Last week a Trial Chamber held a public hearing at The Hague to examine the application, as well as the statements made by the German Government and the defence counsel, who had been granted leave to appear as *amici curiae*. The Trial Chamber upheld the Prosecutor's application and requested Germany to remit the case to our International Tribunal. This first public hearing has at last made our International Tribunal visible to the parties concerned and to world public opinion. In a way, it has not only marked the public birth of our Tribunal, but has also countered, at least in part, the scepticism so frequently expressed.

In addition, at the beginning of November the Prosecutor issued an indictment involving charges of gross violations of the Geneva Conventions and of the laws and customs of warfare, as well as charges of crimes against humanity. This indictment has already been confirmed by the reviewing judge and made public. The reviewing judge also issued two arrest warrants addressed to the relevant national authorities. Soon the Prosecutor will submit further indictments.

It is thus apparent that the initial difficulties are being overcome and the Tribunal's work is proceeding at an increasingly rapid pace. If, as I fervently hope, this Assembly supports our efforts and approves the budgetary requests submitted by the Secretary-General, we in The Hague expect a very busy 1995. We anticipate that from March 1995 the Tribunal will be in continuous session throughout the year. The two Trial Chambers and the Appeals Chamber, having at their disposal only one courtroom, will carry on alternate morning and afternoon proceedings.

I shall wind up my statement with a few general reflections; they will constitute my fourth and final point. We in The Hague are of course aware of the limitations on the role of our Tribunal. We are aware that the sentences we pass will not exhaust the poisoned wells of racial, national or religious hatred. We also know, however, that the setting up of our Tribunal is intended to signal that the world community will not stand idly by, impassively or resignedly, and watch while barbarous acts are perpetrated, unconcerned and unaffected by them only because they are committed in what is for most of us a far-away land, the former Yugoslavia. You, the Members of this Assembly, together with the Security Council, have decided that massacre, rape, "ethnic cleansing" and the wanton killing of civilians affect each and every one of us, whatever our nationality and wherever we live. They affect each and every one of us because they imperil the great principles of civilization enshrined in international legal standards of human rights.

In concluding, let me emphasize that our Tribunal could not have achieved even the initial progress it has made to date without the support of all the State representatives sitting here today. Some have supported us with donations to the Trust Fund of money, equipment, personnel and so on. For that I thank them most sincerely and assure them that every last bit will be used effectively. I must now ask all States to continue to assist us generously, both by way of individual contributions and with overall support for our budget, which is again before this Assembly.

The tasks that the United Nations has entrusted to us are daunting. On the eve of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary, the Organization has decided that the United Nations should broaden its arsenal of pacific means to include resort to international criminal justice as a lawful response to force and violence. All those who are working on behalf of the Tribunal are aware of the heavy responsibility they have been called upon to shoulder on behalf of the whole international community. We shall accomplish the Tribunal's mission to the very best of our ability and energy. We hope thus to make our contribution to alleviating the anguish and sorrow of all those who continue to suffer, even as I speak now, in the former Yugoslavia.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed this morning at 11 a.m.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mrs. Hasan (Pakistan): With the adoption of resolution 827 (1993) on 25 May last year, the Security Council took the momentous decision to establish an International Tribunal for the sole purpose of prosecuting persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1 January 1991.

The Nuremberg Tribunal and the Tokyo Tribunal judged on behalf of the international community those who had committed crimes against humanity during the

Second World War. Those Tribunals were established by the victors of the war and were created in very different circumstances. They were based on moral and juridical principles of a specific nature. In contrast, the International Tribunal on the former Yugoslavia is the first ever established by the United Nations, and thus occupies a unique place in modern history. Its establishment is a judicial response to the demands posed by the situation in the former Yugoslavia, where appalling war crimes and crimes against humanity have been perpetrated on a large scale, mainly by the Serbian side against the Muslims.

Notwithstanding the fact that the historical circumstances surrounding the creation and work of the Nuremberg Tribunal were drastically different from those behind the setting up of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, one cannot fail to note that, in comparison with the Nuremberg Tribunal, which was fully operational within eight months of its creation, the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is not yet in a position to accomplish its primary task: to render justice.

We are, however, encouraged to see the first annual report of the International Tribunal transmitted to the General Assembly by the Tribunal's President, Mr. Antonio Cassese. This comprehensive report provides a detailed account of the progress achieved and the remaining impediments in the way of the Tribunal. My delegation expresses the hope that the three categories of difficulties pointed out in the first annual report of the Tribunal — difficulties of a practical, financial and structural nature — will be overcome quickly in order to render the Tribunal functional and effective as soon as possible.

Strong support and assistance by the Secretary-General, the generous cooperation of a number of States, notably the host State, and the dedication of the Tribunal's staff have made it possible to lay a strong foundation for the Tribunal's tasks. In spite of its own resource constraints, Pakistan has made a financial contribution of $1 million to the Tribunal's budget. We are also proud of the fact that Mr. Justice Rustam Sidhwa, an honourable and distinguished Pakistani, is an elected Judge of the International Tribunal.

We note with appreciation that the essential legal framework for the Tribunal's proceedings, including the rules of procedure and evidence, has been established. Suitable premises have been found for the Tribunal and adapted to the needs of the judicial process. An Acting Registrar has been appointed, the Registry has been staffed, although not yet in full, and the core functions of the Victims and Witnesses Unit have been established. The Detention Unit, where the accused will be held pending trial, has been built, and the necessary rules of detention have been adopted by the Tribunal.

One of the most significant steps taken towards the realization of the tasks of the International Tribunal was the appointment of Judge Richard Goldstone as the Prosecutor of the International Tribunal, who assumed his duties on 15 August 1994. My delegation would assure him of our complete cooperation in the performance of his important task. As the Office of the Prosecutor moves forward with its investigations, an issue of increasing importance will be the protection of witnesses. All Member States must offer full assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor, especially in the protection of witnesses.

We note that the first indictment was made by the Tribunal on 7 November, charging a former commander of a concentration camp operated by the Bosnian Serbs with murder, torture and mutilation of Muslim prisoners. We express the hope that in the coming weeks and months the Prosecutor will issue further indictments for review by judges. The Office of the Prosecutor must be fully staffed and equipped with all the necessary infrastructure and modern technology to ensure its smooth and efficient functioning.

The Tribunal must also establish a liaison office in Sarajevo in order to coordinate its work with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to accomplish its mission of rendering justice expeditiously, the Tribunal will need the continued cooperation of the States Members of the United Nations. We appeal to the international community, particularly the affluent States, to come forward with material and financial assistance to the budget of the International Tribunal.

The establishment of the Tribunal is of enormous significance for the world community, as this institution is called upon not only to vindicate and enforce the abiding demands of justice and humanity, but also to serve as a warning against any future perpetrators of crimes against humanity. My delegation is confident that, with the political, material and financial support of the international community, the Tribunal will be able to carry out its task in an effective and impartial manner and thus open a new path towards the realization of true international peace and justice.

The rendering of justice by the International Tribunal will help to restore humane and peaceful conditions in the war-torn former Yugoslavia and to alleviate the anguish and grief of those who have suffered and who continue to be victims of armed violence and brutality. The example set in the former Yugoslavia will also serve as a warning to other regions where innocent peoples are being subjected to the use of force, brutalities and atrocities, in breach of the norms of international humanitarian law.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I should like to extend my thanks to Mr. Antonio Cassese, President of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. We thank him for the lucid and comprehensive statement he made this morning and assure him that the delegation of Egypt fully understands the nature and dimensions of the problems he referred to in his statement.

Security Council resolution 808 (1993) established the International Tribunal. That was a serious step in the right direction towards putting an end to the human tragedy endured by that region as a result of the military conflict and its attendant heinous racial practices, in particular the policy of "ethnic cleansing", which is, without a doubt, a form of genocide. The Tribunal is unique in modern history. It is the first international criminal tribunal ever to be established by the United Nations and differs in its mission, nature and historical circumstances from the two international military tribunals established in Nuremberg and Tokyo.

The inhuman practices witnessed in the former Yugoslavia make it very important to expedite the prosecution of the perpetrators of war crimes and grave breaches of international humanitarian law. Thus, the Tribunal should take expeditious measures, as the traditional approach could lead to more waste of time, and thereby complicate further the prosecution process.

The delegation of Egypt fully supports the objective requirement which the President of the Tribunal clearly enunciated in his statement, namely the need to provide the financial resources that are necessary for the Tribunal. We call upon the General Assembly to approve the allocation of the necessary resources for the Tribunal's work through the regular budget of the United Nations on an urgent priority basis. This is particularly necessary in the light of the Tribunal President's statement that, starting from March 1995, the Tribunal will be in constant, year-round session. The Trial and Appeals Chambers will be rotating morning and afternoon in their procedures. In this connection, the provisional budget under which the Tribunal is currently working is neither sufficient nor guaranteed to continue. This is a situation that endangers the Tribunal's structure with regard to the recruitment of the necessary staff and impedes the provision of the services needed for the Tribunal to perform its work.

The delegation of Egypt expresses its deepest appreciation to the Tribunal. We also commend the serious initiative of the Tribunal, as made clear earlier by the President of the Tribunal, namely that, despite the lack of resources, the Judges proceeded with their serious task of adopting the rules of procedure, detention of the accused and rules of evidence. My delegation also wishes to commend and pay tribute to the serious steps and efforts taken by the Prosecutor, Mr. Goldstone, to initiate the prosecution proceedings and the issuance of the first indictment early this month. On this occasion, we also pay tribute to the cooperation with the Tribunal of the host country, the Netherlands.

The delegation of Egypt underscores the need to ensure the safety of and provide protection for the witnesses who testify before the Tribunal and provide the evidence whereby it may reach its verdict. It is also important to ensure the full cooperation of States and of international judicial organizations with the Tribunal and its organs as such cooperation is essential to make possible the taking of necessary steps within the framework of the domestic laws of States in enforcing the judgements of the International Tribunal and ensure compliance with requests for assistance or orders made by one of the Tribunal's chambers.

In this connection, it is important to refer to the stipulation in the Statute, which states that the International Tribunal shall have primacy over national courts and prevails over all legal impediments obstructing the extradition or transfer of the accused to the Tribunal.

While considering the Tribunal's report it is important to refer to the Commission of Experts established by the Security Council prior to the establishment of the Tribunal. The Commission has effectively concluded its work and investigations into the war crimes as well as the serious breaches of international humanitarian law in Yugoslavia. It is also important to refer to the importance of the Commission's report and to note that it will be issued as an official Security Council and General Assembly document. That

report is an important document that will assist the Tribunal in its investigation of a number of the crimes committed, namely, rape, torture, maiming and killing, in addition to other acts of intolerable or degrading treatment.

The delegation of Egypt has perused with interest the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/342), which includes the annual report of the International Tribunal transmitted to the Security Council and the General Assembly. My delegation fully supports the contents of the report and concurs with the concluding observations, which state:

> "The establishment of the Tribunal may constitute a turning-point in the world community. If the Tribunal proves that it can work in an effective and dispassionate way and the necessary cooperation of all States and United Nations bodies is forthcoming, it may open a new path towards the realization of true international justice, and hence of peace, in the world community." (*A/49/342, para. 197*)

Mr. Ismail (Malaysia): Just a few minutes ago, Mr. Antonio Cassese, President of the international criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, made an incisive and thought-provoking statement to the Assembly. He very aptly observed that we as Member States have

> "decided that the United Nations should broaden its arsenal of pacific means to include resort to international criminal justice, as a lawful response to force and violence." *(supra, p. 5)*

It is true that we the Members of the Assembly have decided that the world community would not stand idly by impassively watching the perpetrators of barbarous acts brutalizing fellow human beings. Massacre, rape, "ethnic cleansing," the wanton killing of civilians affect all of us irrespective of our creed, race, religion or place of abode. They undermine fundamental values and the greatest principles of all civilizations.

Our deliberations here today must contribute to the work of this Tribunal, which seeks to alleviate the anguish and sorrow of all who have suffered, and continue to suffer, from aggression and "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia. The Tribunal represents the will of the community to bring the perpetrators of crimes against humanity to justice. It can help dissolve the poisonous fumes of resentment and suspicion, and put to rest the lust for revenge.

The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, a forerunner in many ways of the Tribunal on former Yugoslavia, had the benefit of the full support of the victors of the Second World War. The Tribunal on former Yugoslavia remains confronted with a range of issues, both organizational and substantive. These issues have been pointed out by Mr. Cassese in his statement, as well as in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/49/342.

My delegation is concerned over the practical, financial and structural difficulties confronting the Tribunal, particularly in the first few months of its existence. We note that, owing to the shortage of financial resources, the Tribunal has not been able to recruit experienced staff and personnel other than on short-term contracts, thus restricting the choice considerably and hampering its work. The report further discloses that even the judges are still being paid on an ad hoc basis. While we note that some of these problems have been addressed, we firmly believe that the work of the Tribunal should not be made hostage to the availability of resources. In this regard, Malaysia has contributed $2 million for the work of the Tribunal. We call on all Member States to ensure that the Tribunal is adequately funded to ensure that it completes its work.

We regret the unfortunate turn of events that led to the withdrawal of the prosecutor-designate in February 1994 and the ensuing five-month delay in appointing his successor. This was a major blow to the Tribunal. The Office of the Prosecutor, which is responsible for the initiation and conduct of investigations and prosecutions, has been handicapped by the long delay in the appointment of the Prosecutor. My delegation therefore welcomed the appointment of the Honourable Richard Goldstone as Prosecutor in July 1994. This means that the final key element of the Tribunal's structure is now in place.

Malaysia is also concerned about the problems related to staffing in the Office of the Prosecutor. The success of the Tribunal as a whole depends very much on the calibre of the investigative staff of the Office of the Prosecutor. Obviously, if the prosecution's case is not thorough and complete, or is insufficiently prepared, the risk of the failure of prosecution is high. One of the major reasons for the delay in recruiting staff has been identified as the lack of a long-term budget commitment for the Tribunal and the consequent inability on its part to offer long-term contracts of employment to potential staff. We need to address these shortcomings urgently in

order to overcome the problems encountered by the Office of the Prosecutor. My delegation looks forward to their early solution in the Fifth Committee.

To ensure the success of the Tribunal, my delegation wishes to stress how important it is that all States cooperate with it. This is particularly so since the Tribunal lacks any direct authority over the territories of the States Members of the United Nations and, in particular, of the successor Republics of the former Yugoslavia. The Tribunal must rely upon national legal systems and the enforcement machinery of each State to fulfil some of its tasks, including investigations, the subpoenaing of witnesses and the service of arrest warrants in the territories of United Nations Member States. In order to comply with this obligation, all States would need to enact implementing legislation designed to bring their municipal laws in line with the requirements of the statute.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that Malaysia has taken steps to enact legislation in this regard, and we call upon other States to do likewise. Malaysia is also assisting the Prosecutor of the international Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia to interview Bosnian witnesses who are currently residing in Malaysia. An investigation team from the Tribunal should be visiting Malaysia soon to undertake this task.

My delegation believes that non-governmental organizations could assist in the work of the Tribunal. One area where non-governmental organizations can be of immediate assistance is in the provision of information. Those organizations can be invaluable in providing information regarding incidents that fall within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, tracing witnesses and, where possible, providing direct evidence for the use of the Prosecutor. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations could also assist in the provision of support for victims and witnesses. More specifically, they could provide psychological and practical support to victims and witnesses both before and after trials.

The credibility and effectiveness of the Tribunal will be judged by its actions. In this regard we note that the Prosecutor's Office is investigating 12 cases involving multiple suspects. We are confident that the early prosecution of the war criminals would have a deterrent effect on further acts of genocide, in all parts of the world. Criminals cannot go unpunished nor victims be denied justice.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since the beginning of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, numerous crimes against humanity have been committed. During the last three years, the genocidal practice of "ethnic cleansing", involving murder, rape, torture and other inhuman treatment of Bosnian Muslims, perpetrated by the Serbs, has been wounding the conscience of the whole world.

Since the start of Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, many resolutions have been adopted by the Security Council calling for the cessation of hostilities and the termination of aggression, as well as for a halt to violations of international humanitarian law, including "ethnic cleansing". All these calls have been ignored by the Serbs, and the crimes and atrocities against innocent Bosnians are continuing at this very hour. Had the Security Council in fact reacted decisively when its first resolution was violated by the Serbs, the situation of so many Bosnian Muslims would have been different and many lives could have been saved.

The magnitude of these Serbian violations of international law has been so enormous that in February 1993 certain members of the Security Council finally agreed not to oppose the establishment of a tribunal specifically for trying those responsible for war crimes. The setting up of a tribunal to act effectively and expeditiously, rather than relying on the traditional approach of establishing such a body by treaty, which takes many years to reach full ratification, was necessitated by the fact that the case of former Yugoslavia, particularly the case of the Bosnian Muslims, was exceptional, indeed unique, and required immediate action.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always called for the adoption of effective measures against the Serbian aggressors, for the lifting of the unjust arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the trying of those responsible for crimes in former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia. In this regard, we welcomed the establishment of the Tribunal and expressed our desire for full cooperation in the implementation of its responsibilities.

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran has studied with great interest the first annual report, contained in document A/49/342, of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia

since 1991. One of the problems the Tribunal faced at the beginning of its work was the absence of a Prosecutor. It is regrettable that it took so long for the Security Council to appoint a Prosecutor. The Council, in its resolution 827 (1993), stated that the establishment of the Tribunal would

> "contribute to ensuring that such violations are halted and effectively redressed". (*Security Council resolution 827 (1993), seventh preambular paragraph*)

If one of the principal objectives of the Tribunal is to deter further violation of international humanitarian law, how can this long delay in appointing a Prosecutor be justified in the face of continued Serbian aggression and violation of international law? As the report of the Tribunal indicates,

> "The unfortunate turn of events whereby the Prosecutor-designate withdrew in February, and the ensuing five-month delay in appointing his successor was a major blow to the Tribunal." (*A/49/342, para. 37*)

It is a matter of satisfaction that practical and financial problems facing the Tribunal have been largely solved and that delays that had been hampering the work of the Tribunal have now been overcome. Last week, the Tribunal issued its first indictment, against the former Serbian commander of a concentration camp, who was charged with murder, torture and mutilation of Muslim prisoners. This is a welcome development that should be followed by bringing to justice others responsible for war crimes, especially those in command who plan or order large-scale breaches of international humanitarian law. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the assertion in the report that

> "the Tribunal will proceed against any person, regardless of status and rank, against whom the Prosecutor has issued an indictment confirmed by a judge of the Tribunal." (*ibid., para. 49*)

The Tribunal should not only bring war criminals to justice; it should complete its task regardless of the status of political negotiations or the military situation. The Tribunal will act as a powerful deterrent to all if, and only if, it implements its mandate totally.

In conclusion, the Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to cooperate with the Tribunal in fulfilling its worthy task. It is incumbent upon all Member States to resolve all problems that lie outside the Tribunal's power, including the financial problems, so as to enable the Tribunal to complete its mission and bring to justice all those responsible for "ethnic cleansing", genocide, rape, torture, wanton destruction of property, and all other barbarous acts.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): At the outset, allow me to express the gratitude of the Government of the Republic of Croatia to Mr. Antonio Cassese, President of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, for the comprehensive report he has submitted to the General Assembly, which will serve as a valuable basis for informed discussion and future action on this matter.

Croatia has on numerous occasions expressed its support for the establishment of the international Tribunal and understands its obligations in the event that the Tribunal should succeed in prosecuting those who are guilty of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991. We fully share the opinion expressed in the annual report concerning the need for such a tribunal in order not only to dispense justice but also to deter further crimes and to contribute to the restoration and maintenance of peace. It is necessary to bring war criminals and those who have violated humanitarian law to justice in order for reconciliation and confidence-building to occur, thus creating conditions for a just and lasting peace.

It is especially important to ensure that responsibility for the odious crimes that have been committed in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is attributed to the initiators, perpetrators and organizers, and not to entire national groups. That will prevent the assignment of collective responsibility to certain peoples and thereby avoid a development which could have negative consequences for future bilateral and multilateral relations and peace in the region.

In this regard, my Government views with favour the possibility of the establishment of a permanent international tribunal designed to deal with war crimes and violations of humanitarian law wherever they may occur.

My Government agrees with the position of the President of the International Tribunal, as stated in the report, that the establishment of this international body

through the exercise of the special powers of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations was more rapid than establishment through an international treaty. However, we are of the opinion that the work of the International Tribunal has been proceeding too slowly, largely due to insufficient support — particularly political support — by influential members of the international community.

Likewise, we wish to stress that there has been insufficient financial support for the work of the Tribunal. In this regard, we cannot but express our dismay that the overwhelming majority of the financial contributions in support of the Tribunal have come from the developing countries.

The Republic of Croatia is concerned at various statements by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) that indicate its unwillingness to cooperate with the Tribunal, especially regarding the extradition of suspected war criminals. We are afraid that this might have an extremely negative impact on the effectiveness of the work of the Tribunal.

It must be noted that this represents a continuing pattern of refusal by the Serbian side to cooperate with the international community. Their refusal to allow for an international investigation of the various mass grave sites in the occupied territories of Croatia — and particularly of the Ovcara mass grave near the Croatian city of Vukovar — is extremely disturbing to Croatia and clearly indicates that the Serbian side continues to obstruct the noble path of legal justice.

If a situation were to occur whereby those in Serbia who committed the grave crimes mentioned earlier were not to be tried, this would represent a miscarriage of justice and would undermine the very credibility of the international Tribunal as well as its legal and moral authority. It would negate the very purpose of the Tribunal's establishment, and it would send completely the wrong message to present and potential war criminals and to those who might commit aggression and genocide in the future.

We wish further to state that since, according to the findings of the Commission of Experts, there was no equivalence of guilt, there can be no equal "balance" between the number of those from each side who are charged with war crimes. Furthermore, there can be no equivalence of the charges to be presented against those representing the side that planned, orchestrated and executed the aggression and genocide and those representing the sides that were victimized by that policy. The aggressors must not be equated with the victims of aggression.

In this connection, I should like to recall the various reports of Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Special Rapporteur for the former Yugoslavia of the Commission on Human Rights and the final report of the Commission of Experts pursuant to Security Council resolution 780 (1992), in which it is stated that

> "there is no factual basis for arguing that there is a 'moral equivalence' between the warring factions". *(S/1994/674, para. 149)*

In order to induce the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to cooperate with the international Tribunal, it may be necessary to link its cooperation with the easing of the sanctions that have been imposed on it, or to impose stricter sanctions if that State still refuses to comply.

In closing, we wish to reiterate our conviction that the international Tribunal is a necessary factor in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in our region. For that reason, we stress the necessity for all States to comply with the Security Council and cooperate with the Tribunal.

Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina): We are pleased to have the opportunity to review the efforts made so far by the international war crimes Tribunal and to reinvigorate the support for the Tribunal's work. We look forward to such future opportunities on a regular basis. As for now, we must emphasize our satisfaction that the Tribunal is finally functioning after some unexpected, and at times unexplained, delays.

We now must place our full confidence in the Office of the Prosecutor and in Judge Goldstone's commitment to an effort not to be diminished or undermined by political considerations. We are confident that Judge Goldstone, the Prosecutor's staff, the investigators, the Registrar, and, of course, the judges of the Tribunal share the view that the efficacious prosecution of war criminals, from whatever military or political ranks they may come, will make a positive, rather than negative, contribution to the peace effort.

Political expediency cannot be the basis for justice, and injustice cannot be the basis for a durable peace.

We would look for the Office of the Prosecutor to be vigilant in identifying and, if necessary, disclosing attempts to destabilize and undermine the Tribunal's work.

Despite our current confidence in the undertakings of the Tribunal and the Office of the Prosecutor, certain considerations concern us today:

First, the Tribunal will be in a position to address only a handful of the many of thousands of potential cases. As a consequence, the Tribunal, along with the international community, must endeavour to assist national courts, including those of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in bringing the war criminals to justice.

In this context, we are most supportive of the Tribunal's and the Prosecutor's commitment to establish liaison offices, including one in our capital, Sarajevo.

We also hope that the Tribunal's capacity limitation will not heighten attempts to project equivalence. Although the criminal acts may not be limited to just one side, only one side has made these crimes a tool of its military and political agenda.

For our part, the civilian and military courts of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina have already brought to justice — and will continue to do so — not only Serbian paramilitary forces but others, including people of Bosniac ethnicity, for criminal acts committed against any citizen.

We are proud of, and remain dedicated to, the impartiality of our justice system. At the same time, the Tribunal and those who truly support its efforts must remain cognizant that it is the Serbian side — not the ethnic group, but the political leadership of Serbia and Montenegro and its surrogates in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina — that is responsible not only for numerous individual criminal actions but also for a systematic campaign that constitutes the most blatant violation of the Geneva Conventions and of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

In this context, we remain concerned at the fact that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) has continued to assert that it will not cooperate with the Tribunal and the Office of the Prosecutor.

The Security Council must ensure the readiness of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to cooperate with the Tribunal and the Office of the Prosecutor before any further rehabilitation or easing of sanctions is even considered. The Tribunal and the Office of the Prosecutor are totally reliant upon the will of, and on the mechanisms available to, the Security Council in seeking the cooperation of the various nations involved.

Easing the sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro would be unseemly and counter-productive at any time in the future if the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) continues to be uncooperative. Otherwise, the Security Council in effect would be undermining the efforts of the very institution it has established as a key to not only justice but also peace.

In line with General Assembly resolution 49/10, we once again re-emphasize the call for material assistance to the Tribunal's work and thank those who have already provided resources, including the home for the Tribunal in The Hague.

We would also be remiss if we did not once again express our gratitude for the efforts of the war crimes Commission, as both the predecessor of the Tribunal and as an institution that has contributed on its own. We believe that the Commission, under Cherif Bassiouni's leadership, will uniquely contribute to the understanding of the systematic criminal campaign and genocide committed against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people.

Finally, we ask the international community, and especially the Security Council, to remain available to adjust the mandate and tools necessary for the Tribunal and Prosecutor's Office in pursuit of their respective agendas. We share the concerns of many, including the Government of Rwanda, that expectations of the Tribunal are very high while the necessary tools and criminal remedies available to it are limited and potentially inadequate, in view of the scope as well as the severity of the crimes.

We took particular note of the statement of Judge Antonio Cassese, President of the international war crimes Tribunal on the former Yugoslavia. We wholeheartedly agree that the Tribunal's efforts, in Freud's terminology, are a "palliative device". The Tribunal cannot be a substitute for confronting war criminals and for peacemaking, but must supplement such efforts as the final act of peacemaking. However, these shortcomings are not reflective of the Tribunal and its participants; rather, they reflect the inadequate political

and military response of the Powers that could confront the very criminals the Tribunal seeks to bring to justice.

Now let us offer our sincere support for the efforts of the Tribunal.

The President: We have heard the last speaker on this item. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 149?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 17

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments: reports of the Fifth Committee

The President *(interpretation from French):* If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee which are before it today.

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we shall proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

(a) **Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: report of the Fifth Committee (Parts II and III) (A/49/432/Add.1 and 2)**

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 9 of part II of its report that the General Assembly should appoint the following persons as members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Ahmad Fathi Al-Masri, Mr. Ioan Barac, Mr. Mahamane Maiga, Mr. E. Besley Maycock and Mr. C. S. M. Mselle.

May I take it that the Assembly appoints those persons?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 4 of part III of its report that the General Assembly should appoint Mrs. Norma Goicochea Estenoz as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 14 November 1994 and ending on 31 December 1996.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to appoint Mrs. Norma Goicochea Estenoz as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 14 November 1994 and ending on 31 December 1996?

It was so decided.

(b) **Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/657)**

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 8 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly should appoint the following persons as members of the Committee on Contributions for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Uldis Blukis, Mr. David Etuket, Mr. Igor V. Goumenny, Mr. William Grant, Mr. Masao Kawai, Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint those persons?

It was so decided.

(c) **Appointment of a member of the Board of Auditors: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/658)**

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 4 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly should appoint the Comptroller and Auditor-General of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a member of the United Nations Board of Auditors for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 July 1995.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to appoint this person?

It was so decided.

(d) Confirmation of the appointment of members of the Investments Committee: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/659)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 4 of its report that the General Assembly should confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of the following persons as members of the Investments Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Ahmad Abdullatif, Mr. Aloysio de Andrade Faria and Mr. Stanislaw Raczkowski.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to confirm the appointment of these persons?

It was so decided.

(e) Appointment of members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/660)

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 4 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly should appoint the following persons as members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Balanda Mikuin Leliel, Mr. Samarendra Sen and Mr. Hubert Thierry.

May I consider that the Assembly appoints those persons?

It was so decided.

(f) International Civil Service Commission: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/661)

(i) Appointment of members of the Commission

(ii) Designation of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Commission

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 8 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly should appoint the following persons as members of the International Civil Service Commission for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Mohsen Bel Hadj Amor, Mrs. Turkia Daddah, Mr. André Xavier Pirson, Mr. Jaroslav Riha and Mr. Carlos S. Vegega.

May I consider that the General Assembly appoints these persons?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* In the same paragraph, the Fifth Committee recommends that the Assembly designate Mr. Mohsen Bel Hadj Amor as Chairman and Mr. Carlos Vegega as Vice-Chairman of the Commission for a four-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995.

May I take it that the Assembly designates these persons as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Commission?

It was so decided.

(g) Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/656)

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 5 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly should appoint the following persons as members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 1995: Mr. Tadanori Inomata, Mr. Vladimir V. Kuznetsov, Mr. Philip Richard Okanda Owade, Ms. Susan Shearouse, Mr. Clive Stitt and Mr. M. El Hassane Zahid.

May I take it that the General Assembly appoints these persons?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of agenda item 17.

It was so decided.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Fourth report of the General Committee (A/49/250/Add.3)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The fourth report of the General Committee concerns a request by a number of countries for the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "Capital punishment".

The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be included in the agenda.

In accordance with rule 23 of the rules of procedure,

"Debate on the inclusion of an item in the agenda, when that item has been recommended for inclusion by the General Committee, shall be limited to three speakers in favour of, and three speakers against, the inclusion."

Mr. Ferrarin (Italy): The General Assembly is called upon today to take a decision on the inclusion in its agenda of an additional item entitled "Capital punishment". The request for such inclusion was signed by 34 countries, including Italy.

On 7 November 1994, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be included in the agenda and should be allocated to the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100, entitled "Human rights questions".

We have already had the opportunity to explain why Italy is leading this initiative, which is not intended to add fuel to the fire on a very controversial issue, but only to give Member States the opportunity to have a debate on it.

First, my country's Parliament has passed a motion mandating the Government to submit a request for the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly. This decision reflects the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the Italian people.

Secondly, other initiatives have emphasized the death penalty issue, such as the resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 4 October 1994, in which all States that have not yet abolished capital punishment are asked to do so.

Thirdly, on 21 September 1994, the Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a letter urging the countries that had not yet done so to ratify the second United Nations optional protocol aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. On 26 October 1994, the second optional protocol was approved by the Italian Chamber of Deputies and has been sent to the Senate for final approval in the next few days. Furthermore, my country has just abolished the death penalty also for crimes committed in wartime under military law.

I should like to add some remarks on the point of the allocation of the item. We have already agreed in the General Committee, in a spirit of compromise, to scale down the question of putting capital punishment on the agenda of the General Assembly from an item to a sub-item, sub-item (e) of the existing item 100, entitled "Human rights questions", and allocate it to the Third Committee.

We were and are unable, much to our regret, to make further concessions. In particular, we cannot accept the allocation of the question to the Sixth Committee rather than to the Third. This is so for a number of reasons which we have already explained but which I would like to repeat.

First, in the United Nations from the very beginning capital punishment has been debated by the Third Committee as a human rights issue. It would be extremely difficult to explain to our Parliament and to our public opinion why the matter should be treated in a different framework and by a different body, especially if one considers that even the second optional protocol, aimed at the abolition of the death penalty, was drafted in the Third Committee and not in the Sixth Committee.

Secondly, if we allocate the question to the Sixth Committee we would have to add a separate item to the General Assembly's agenda, which would reopen the problem that the compromise on the sub-item was intended to solve — that is to say, the problem of not overburdening that agenda.

Thirdly, it is an established practice of the Sixth Committee to finish its work by the week of Thanksgiving — that is to say, less than a week from now. There would hardly be enough time for the 34 countries that are requesting the inclusion of the item in

the agenda, and for others, to express their views on such an important matter fully and thoroughly, since the Sixth Committee's calendar is already rather overburdened. The alternative to a very short and compressed debate would be to refer the item to next year, which we cannot accept.

For all those reasons, I am confident that the General Assembly will follow the recommendations of the General Committee and decide to include "Capital punishment" in its agenda as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100 and to allocate it to the Third Committee. We hope that this decision will be taken by consensus. If, however, a vote is requested, I should like to ask all delegations to vote in favour of the inclusion of the item on the agenda and of its allocation to the Third Committee.

Mr. Minoves-Triquell (Andorra): As I stated in the General Committee, for centuries the Principality of Andorra has taken a particular interest in matters relating to the dignity of the human being in all its forms. While the death penalty was in existence, the Andorran people were always deeply affected when it was applied. A French weekly noted this about Andorra in 1846:

(spoke in French)

> "The memory of a death sentence passed in the seventeenth century still today fills the people with dread."

(spoke in English)

Perhaps the fact that Andorra has been blessed by decades of a low rate of criminality has allowed us to distance ourselves from the notion of capital punishment. Perhaps the small size of our community has made us very appreciative of the value of human life.

The last sentence to death in our country was carried out in 1945. It caused great consternation and deep sociological shock, which our writers have reflected upon in the decades following the event. Finally, having died from non-use, the death penalty was abolished formally in 1990.

True to the deep-rooted principles of their political philosophy, the citizens of Andorra, in the exercise of their sovereignty, enshrined their commitment against the death penalty in the Constitution of 1993. Article 8 states:

> "1. The Constitution recognizes the right to life and fully protects it in its different phases.
>
> "2. All persons have the right to physical and moral integrity. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
>
> "3. The death penalty is prohibited."

The death penalty is of primordial concern to our people. Therefore it is only natural that we signed the request to the General Committee in document A/49/234, of 25 October 1994, and its addendum.

But the death penalty is also the concern of a larger body of people. Last Friday my country joined the Council of Europe, the parliamentary assembly of which, on 4 October 1994, adopted a resolution advocating the abolition of capital punishment.

(spoke in French)

At this end of the second millennium of our era it would appear that the peoples of the world, ever-more-tightly bound by a system of world-wide trade and cultural exchanges, have increasingly embraced the philosophy of tolerance, respect for human rights, peace instead of war, and life instead of death.

The debate on capital punishment is therefore clearly part of this world-wide debate on the dignity of the human being. The United Nations, as the forum for rational dialogue *par excellence*, is the ideal place to exchange views on the question before us.

That is why the Principality of Andorra would welcome the General Assembly's adoption of the General Committee's recommendation first, that the additional item entitled "Capital punishment" be included in the agenda; and, secondly, that, as is only natural, it be discussed in the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions".

Mr. Chaves (Kyrgyzstan): The Republic of Kyrgyzstan has deep feelings of concern about the subject of this discussion.

We have all observed the great increase in crime throughout the world and the concern that all nations and peoples of the world feel about this subject.

The subject of capital punishment has been dealt with very extensively by great philosophers. The founding father of criminal law, Cesare Beccaria,

referred to the subject a long time ago. We also find references to it by Montesquieu and Voltaire

But at present there is genuine concern throughout the world about this subject. There is an increase in violent crime; there is a very great increase in crimes against humanity and genocide; and there is also a great increase in the violation of human rights of a criminal nature. Therefore it is only natural that the General Assembly should concern itself with the subject of crime and capital punishment.

On this subject I should like briefly to quote the following from Dostoyevsky:

> "We cannot judge crime with ready-made opinions. The philosophy of crime is a little more complicated than people think. It is acknowledged that neither prisons for convicts nor the hulks nor any system of hard labour ever cured a criminal."

For all those reasons, the delegation of Kyrgyzstan supports the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the General Assembly.

The President *(interpretation from French):* We have now heard three speakers in favour of the inclusion of this item in the agenda.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and to put on record our views on the request, contained in documents A/49/234 and Add.1, for the inclusion of an additional item entitled "Capital punishment" in the agenda of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

Prior to the meeting on 7 November 1994 of the General Committee, whose report is at present under the General Assembly's consideration, the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in New York met for an exchange of views on the request for the inclusion of an additional item, "Capital punishment". While recognizing the right of Member States to request the inscription of additional items, the members of the OIC felt that, in view of the highly sensitive and controversial nature of the proposal, there was a need to carry out further consultations before proceeding with its inscription as an additional item on the General Assembly's agenda at the current session. The OIC also felt that the request was not urgent enough to merit its inscription as an additional item.

The group also expressed its very strong objection to allocating the proposed additional agenda item on capital punishment to the Third Committee, as proposed by the sponsors. However, the members of the OIC, exhibiting a spirit of compromise and wishing to promote consensus, felt that, in the event that the General Committee were to agree to the request of the sponsors to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of the additional item, it should be allocated to the Sixth Committee, not to the Third Committee, as a sub-item of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions".

These decisions of the OIC were conveyed in writing by its Chairman to you, Mr. President, for the information of the members of the General Committee when it met on 7 November. Much to the regret of the OIC countries, the sponsors of the proposed additional item opted instead to take a vote on their proposal in the General Committee meeting on 7 November, without giving due consideration to the extremely pertinent views of the OIC.

The OIC members continue to have serious reservations about the inscription of a new agenda sub-item, "Capital punishment", and its allocation to the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions". It is our hope that the members of the General Assembly will give appropriate consideration to the views of the 51 States Members of the OIC when considering the report of the General Committee contained in document A/49/250/Add.3. We should not be led to accommodate the domestic compulsions of any country.

Mr. Razali (Malaysia): During the consideration of this issue in the General Committee last week, my delegation stated its position. As this issue is now before the General Assembly, it is necessary to restate Malaysia's position.

Malaysia opposes the inclusion of the item in the agenda. We cannot agree to such an inclusion, as we believe that it is the right of every State to choose the most appropriate penal system in response to the needs of its own society.

Like many other countries of both the North and the South, Malaysia has capital punishment in its laws. This does not mean that we do not value life. Throughout its history, Malaysia has been at the confluence of many humanistic civilizations. Our society and our laws are predicated on humanism, justice and the necessity of the

State's possessing the proper deterrent to violations of law, commensurate with the degree of such violations. Our people and our society are at peace with this power of the State, including the death penalty, even if the manifestations of our society celebrate the sanctity and beauty of life.

Our problem with the initiative at hand is its single-mindedness and its blanket attempt to impose one point of view on all societies, when that point of view may apply to only a few. Furthermore, this initiative takes no account of differences in cultural mores. It is not sensitive to different needs. While the motive behind the initiative is respected, it cannot be forced to apply to all.

The initiative, even if the purpose is to have a debate, will divide us. It would be a serious mistake if that division were seen to be on the basis of religion. The last thing we should do is to debate the religion or culture of one against that of the other.

The initiative seeks to impose a moral imperative, but the effect of that effort tends towards being divisive, intrusive and non-applicable. It had been my delegation's hope that the sponsors would undertake further consultations on this issue. If, however, the proposal is put to a vote today, my delegation will vote against it.

Mr. Yousif (Sudan) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Contrary to its customary practice of adopting decisions by consensus, the General Committee voted on the question of including a new agenda item entitled "Capital punishment". The inclusion of the item calling for the abolition of the death penalty, was passed by a majority of 17 votes out of a total of 33 votes in the General Committee. It was clear that many countries abstained from voting in favour of the inclusion of the item because of the sensitivity of the issue and because it touches upon the sovereign rights of States and, therefore, it should not be included as an item on the agenda.

My delegation believes that the discussion in the Third Committee of the question of abolishing the death penalty as a sub-item of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions", would put my country, along with more than 130 States Members of this Organization that apply the death penalty, in a very awkward position. We in the Sudan consider the death penalty to be divinely ordained. Allah almighty says in the Koran:

> "In the Law of Equality there is life to you, O ye men of understanding that ye may Restrain yourselves". *(Sura 2, Verse 179)*

The abolition or non-abolition of the death penalty is a matter that has to do with the jurisdiction of sovereign States. The adoption by the United Nations of a resolution on this question may infuriate public opinion in the whole world. It may put the United Nations in the unacceptable position of contradicting the principles enshrined in the very Charter of the United Nations, especially paragraph 7 of Article 2, which prohibits the United Nations from intervening in the internal affairs of any country.

Also Article 13 of the Charter stipulates that the General Assembly shall initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of promoting international cooperation.

The delegation of my country believes that the Sixth Committee, rather than the Third Committee, is the appropriate body to look into the question of the death penalty. That opinion is based on the fact that the death penalty is more a legal matter than a human-rights question. The abolition of the death penalty and the whole matter of the relationship between national jurisdiction and international jurisdiction might give rise to legal problems. There is also the question that the call for abolishing the death penalty runs counter to the provisions of the Charter in the Articles I have just mentioned.

There are also the legal aspects relating to the question of the usefulness of the death penalty as a means of combating crime at the national and international levels and the effect this may have on preserving the stability of societies and the lives of individuals. There is no doubt at all that it is the Sixth Committee that has the mandate to consider the question, as it is the Committee that discusses all legal matters.

For all these reasons, my delegation finds that this Assembly should have voted on paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report contained in document A/49/250/Add.3.

The inclusion of this item on our agenda and its allocation to the Third Committee or the Sixth Committee is a procedural matter. What concerns us here is the substantive aspect with all its grave dimensions. We do not see any benefit that would accrue to international cooperation from the abolition of the death penalty. Even

if such a resolution were to be adopted by the General Assembly, we could not expect all the Member States to accept it, as a majority of them apply the death penalty in accordance with their national legislation. That being the case, the delegation of my country asks the Assembly to proceed with a recorded vote on the inclusion of this item on its agenda. Once this is done, there should be a vote on the allocation of the item to the Third Committee.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Three delegations have now spoken against the inclusion of this additional item on the agenda.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on the inclusion of the additional item.

A vote has been requested, and we shall now begin the voting process.

I put to the vote the General Committee's recommendation that an additional item entitled "Capital punishment" be included in the agenda of the present session.

The recommendation was adopted by 70 votes to 24, with 42 abstentions.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The additional item entitled "Capital punishment" is thus included in the agenda.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes.

Mr. Chew (Singapore): My delegation abstained in the voting on the inclusion of the item entitled "Capital punishment" in the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Singapore does not support the abolition of capital punishment and does not agree with the substance of the draft resolution contained in the appendix to document A/49/234, which was submitted by the countries that asked for the inclusion of this item. But my delegation abstained in the voting as Singapore has consistently adhered to the principle that it is the right of any delegation to request the inclusion of an item in the agenda of the General Assembly, provided that it is not one that runs counter to the United Nations Charter or is frivolous. However, when the item comes up for consideration my delegation will strongly oppose the attempt by countries, through the United Nations General Assembly, to seek the abolition of capital punishment in other countries.

While we understand and respect the position of those countries that are opposed to the death penalty, they must appreciate the position of other countries, like Singapore, that have capital punishment.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) *(interpretation from French)*: Capital punishment is, undoubtedly an important question and a sensitive issue. It is not a new question, either, as it has been a matter of conscience for mankind since the beginning of life in organized society. Nor is it, in view of the priorities and the work of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, a matter of such urgency that it justifies inscribing an additional item on the agenda without adequate previous consultation and in particular, as a result of a vote in the Bureau and then in the General Assembly — something which immediately introduces an element of confrontation in the consideration of this item that is prejudicial to the very cause the delegations that have sponsored the proposal claim to promote.

The harmonization of national legislations whilst respecting the principle of consensus, which is the very basis of contemporary international law and which is inherent in the sovereignty of States, is both an arduous and a desirable task. Such harmonization often needs long and laborious processes to mature and presupposes that the specific nature of the differences in the various legal systems and the various schools of thought is not blurred but, rather, that the common ground between them is enhanced, in view of the respect due to the referential values of all legal orders that underlie the legislation of States.

The United Nations work to codify and progressively develop international law in various spheres of human activity, including criminal law, bears witness to the fact that the universal accession to standards, particularly when they are not based on customary law, has always been characterized by the compatibility — or by the lack of incompatibility — of those standards with the underlying principles of national legislations. Indeed, it is this very wise and pragmatic approach that prevailed in connection with the matter before us, since capital punishment in international law is the subject of a strictly optional protocol, this statute naturally reflecting the objective constraints that make it impossible to unify law in this matter at the level of the international community as a whole.

It would have been sufficient, and undoubtedly much more appropriate, for the sponsors to have chosen to deal with the question of capital punishment under an existing agenda item, perhaps that on the implementation of human rights instruments or the more general topic of crime prevention and criminal justice. The debate might have, once again, clarified positions in a calm and responsible manner. Understanding would thereby have been fostered and confrontation avoided.

But that was not the choice made, and several sponsors indicated during the deliberations in the Bureau that their initiative would not be held up by an effort to find consensus. This choice is fraught with consequences for the expected outcome of the work of the General Assembly on this matter, for it immediately introduces an inopportune and unfortunate division, whereas the general trend is towards promoting compromise and consensus by means of negotiation and mutual concessions on many important issues on this session's agenda.

This procedural debate is not the appropriate framework for the consideration of the substance of the matter. In the light of a mere procedural vote, no hasty conclusion should therefore be drawn with regard to the dedication of anyone to the value and the dignity of the human person, as well as to human rights and fundamental freedoms in general. The question that arises is whether it is opportune to include such an item on the agenda of the General Assembly, whether there is any likelihood of arriving at a positive result, bearing duly in mind the workload of the current session and the necessary energy and effort required to ensure the successful conclusion of our work on a range of issues of the highest relevance to daily life and the future of the peoples of the United Nations.

The delegation of Algeria is not convinced of the expediency of including this item on the agenda. Nor are we convinced that there is any possibility of agreement on any positive result. Its negative vote is based on all these considerations.

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The idea of punishing a human being with death, however duly tried and convicted, has always engaged the deep human emotions of compassion, tenderness and kindness. These are considerations that are deeply rooted in the Islamic system of criminal justice. Nevertheless, Islam recognizes the legitimacy of reserving capital punishment for a restricted number of heinous crimes where the criminal justice system defends the safety, integrity and welfare of the public at large against the criminal. The Islamic Republic of Iran applies the rule of Islamic law and, as such, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran opposes any attempt to impose universally the abolition of capital punishment.

Having said that, my delegation believes that reserving capital punishment for a restricted number of grievous crimes serves the common good to the extent that its abolition, however appealing to human compassion, will not. The argument against the deterrent effect of capital punishment is not convincing. In our view, taking into account all aspects of crime, particularly in today's complex world, deterrence and retribution play a significant role in justifying a commitment to and the administration of capital punishment. Therefore, my delegation voted against, on substantive grounds, the proposal to include an item in this regard on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Eldeeb (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The question of applying or abolishing the death penalty is a matter that has to do with the judicial system of every individual State. The application of that penalty aims primarily at protecting the most important human right, the right to life. Capital punishment in countries which apply the death penalty is a means of deterring those who would commit the crime of murder and thereby would take the life of another. Thus the application of the death penalty reduces crime rates. It is well known that judicial systems are based on values that stem from the cultural background and the civilization of each particular country. Therefore, from the standpoint of respecting the specific and multifarious aspects of those States in religious and cultural terms, the international community tended to deal with this question in the context of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Proceeding from this, the delegation of Egypt believes that the discussion of the question of the application or abolition of the death penalty by the General Assembly, with a view to adopting a resolution to abolish that penalty is unjustifiable because such hasty action would involve disregarding the characteristics and differences we have just highlighted, and would be tantamount to superseding the framework established by the protocol which gave States the option of whether or not they should take such a measure. On the other hand, my delegation believes that if it is necessary for the General Assembly to deal with questions concerning the application of the death penalty, this should be done first of all by putting things

into perspective and the question should be referred to the Sixth Committee, as it is the Committee which deals with legal and legislative matters relating to the different judicial systems of States. Consequently, it is clear that the consideration of the application or abolition of the death penalty is a legal issue rather than a human rights issue. Proceeding from this, my delegation has voted against the inclusion of this item on the agenda and against its allocation to the Third Committee.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The General Committee further decided to recommend to the Assembly that the item entitled "Capital punishment" be allocated to the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions".

A vote has been requested, and we shall now begin the voting process.

I put to the vote the recommendation by the General Committee that the agenda item entitled "Capital punishment" be allocated to the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100, "Human rights questions".

The recommendation was adopted by 69 votes to 25, with 37 abstentions.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The agenda item entitled "Capital punishment" is allocated to the Third Committee as sub-item (e) of agenda item 100.

The Chairman of the Third Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.